

CABLE TELEVISION AND THE LOCAL CHURCH :
TECHNOLOGY AND TRADITION AS SERVANTS

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DAVID CRAIG CHAPMAN
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This dissertation, written by

DAVID CRAIG CHAPMAN

*under the direction of his Faculty Committee,
and approved by its members, has been presented
to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of
Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF RELIGION

Faculty Committee

Alan D. Rhodes
John B. Cobb Jr.

Date June 5, 1975

Joseph C. Houder Jr.

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David C. Chapman
ReID
School of Theology
Claremont, California

' CABLE TELEVISION AND THE LOCAL CHURCH: TECHNOLOGY AND TRADITION AS SERVANTS '

This dissertation has been written as a means of integrating the learning experiences of a four-year professional program in religion. As in much of Claremont's work, it is oriented towards life and ministry in the local church and congregation. It is intended to help the local church re-shape its approach towards media and to develop a creative response to the impact and potential of the cable television system in the local community.

The author initially summarizes his own experiences and reflection about the church's attitudes and response towards the media, particularly in film, radio, and television. The general picture drawn in this summary serves as a reference for comparison to an alternative response developed in later chapters.

The second chapter provides an introduction to the basic technology and programming capability of the cable system, particularly the possibilities for use of lightweight, portable, and relatively inexpensive 'porta-pak' television equipment. This segment is based on the author's own organizational, planning, and programming experience with cable systems. It attempts to describe the cable as a tool for change and growth rather than a provider of entertainment and product/service information.

It is the author's contention that christological images currently provide significant kinds of guidelines for the local church. In his own experience, the local church and its members usually described itself in such christological images as 'body of Christ' or as the 'living servant' - the incarnation of the Christ. Such self-understanding is basic to most local congregations. It is the proposal of this chapter that specific christological references can provide insight and direction for the church's contact with cable television. The work of Emil Brunner in The Mediator, James Gustafson in Christ and the Moral Life,

and Dorothee Soelle in Christ the Representative is examined briefly here and a short descriptive image is prepared for each. There is no attempt to be exhaustive, or even complete, in the handling of this task. The author has sought only to provide working images that reflect the basic christological thinking of each of these theologians. Each of these images is then briefly examined in relation to the task of institutional modeling.

John Dulles' work, Models of the Church provides a framework for the use and construction of models for institutional organization and action. The two categories of 'explanatory' and 'exploratory' models are presented and the balance of chapter three places the three previously defined christological images into a basic outline of an exploratory model.

Chapter four is a specific outline of the local church and a program for cable television. In particular, the resources of the church in facilities, experience, and most importantly, personnel, are examined to suggest ways in which the local congregation can facilitate the creative and human-oriented development of cable. The technology of cable defines it as a pluralistic medium, giving voice and communications medium to ideas and groups which have never before had access to a mass medium. For the local church, this chapter argues the value of pluralism and provides real experiences as illustrations of the manner in which the church can use and help others to use cable.

The fifth, and final chapter is a personal vision of the author based on his work and studies at the School of Theology at Claremont. It is a detailed and functional model of a program and organizational structure in which the School could develop teaching, consulting, and exploratory resources in the development of cable television. Not only the technology of both studio and porta-pak programming is considered, but also the formulation and design of cable ordinances for local communities is presented. Also included is the necessary design information for construction of a cable system for exploratory learning at the campus of the School of Theology at Claremont.

- David C. Chapman

INTRODUCTION

My first experience in the field of communications came, as did much of my growing up, in the church, with old 16mm projectors, filmstrips, and record players. I was fascinated by this 'technology', simple and often unreliable though it was. While the skills of working the machines were more important to me than the images in celluloid or the sounds on plastic, several impressions remain clear in my mind. Most of the filmstrips were Bible stories, simply illustrated and narrated by a single voice reading Scripture and re-interpreting it for various age groups. Films were confined to a narrow band of church or moral entertainment films. I remember seeing 'The Parable' five times, (once a year for five years!).

Thinking back on those years, it is singularly important to me that no media - making activities took place in the church. I don't remember any use of a tape recorder, or even a simple camera for program or teaching activities. But this is a technician's lament and I should not overlook that many teachers used flannel boards and puppets in their work. These too are media in their own right. More important to me was the fact that 'outside' media, eg - the movies or television, were never brought into the church's program discussion. Of course, during this period in the 50's and early 60's, there was little consciousness in the local church about the role and promise of media in all

areas of human activity. And to us, in the churches, media was supplemental only, a way of holding and delivering a sermon to more listeners at a different time and place. But it is isolation which describes my early experience of the church's working, ministry and self-understanding. Our life was all ' in - house ' with occasional visits to and from other churches and other ministers, and, once a year, a visit from a missionary on leave from his foreign assignment. The media was singularly absent as a means of telling us about either the world of the church or the world outside of the church.

Leaving any technical criticism behind, there are other observations about my local church's self-understanding. It now seems to me that what was true about my local church during these years is likely to have been true of or at least similar to what other churches of the same general size and congregational makeup were doing. This introduction is predicated upon my early experience being a general rule for the Protestant local church rather than the exception. A big assumption, I realize, but one which I believe justified and acceptable for my purposes.

There is a satirical version of a common church hymn which reads, ' A Mighty Fortress is Our Church, Against Neighborhood Ills Prevailing. ' The world of the institutional church was a world entirely unto itself. Its contact with other churches in the public life was maintained

to serve the church's need and little attempt was made to understand and learn from their experience and skills. The knowledge and insight of businesses, schools, service agencies, and other organizations was simply not a commodity in which my church showed any interest. One of these 'outside' institutions was the communications media of radio and television. I worked for a short time helping to record the Sunday morning services for delayed radio broadcast - often delayed or entirely preempted by the baseball game! Even here, the church's use of media, via the tape recorder, was solely for the purpose of canning and re-communicating the existing program, eg - sermon, to a different 'radio' congregation. In a like manner, on Christmas and Easter, television crews came to the church to videotape services for delayed broadcast over local channels. I remember a television cameraman, (apparently a devout Baptist!), telling me that the taping really was a ministry to the sick and shut-ins. This was an event for me to think about. At this time in my life, credentials belonged to the technicians and not the clergy and this cameraman's statement had a tremendous impact on me.

I attended several workshops while in college, most of which were concerned with communications and the church. It was the national offices of the church that sponsored these workshops and also made it possible for me to go. And it was the national staff of church leaders who seemed

convinced that the church itself could and should ' do media '. I was taught to use the technology-- recorders, cameras, projectors-- and to do limited ' in-house ' production. Returning to my local church, I found interest, but not much support for a place for media production in our local church education program.

What I failed to understand at these workshops was that new directions were being forecast for the church and the media. Proponents of media usage in the local church were suggesting that the church should use commercial entertainment films and network television programs as resources to learn about the world outside of the church. Among commercial films, 'The Pawnbroker' and 'Mickey One' were named as films that spoke of and to the Christian experience and understanding of man. I promptly took a group of high school students to see 'The Pawnbroker', but between my inexperience in interpretation of the Christian message and lack of understanding of film, combined with the parental scream about the brief nudity scenes in the film, the experiment was doomed to failure. It was at the national church youth conferences where significant events occurred in using the commercial film to speak to and about the Gospel. These conferences confirmed by own opinions about the church and film and added fuel to my fire for experimentation.

During all this period of growth and my becoming aware of media, I was also concerned with another problem. It seemed to me, and still does, that churches have elaborate and expensive facilities in buildings and equipment of which they make extremely poor use. I also learned of the church trustee's concern and responsibility as I suggested ways to use the buildings and grounds of the church for 'outside groups'. I met stiff resistance expressed in such words as 'risk', 'damages', 'insurance' and 'operating costs'. This was instructive as I learned that property and finances ultimately had the final say over ministry, at least during that time and in that place. But the same, I believe, holds true for most churches today.

I think recalling my early experiences in a local church has been sufficient groundwork to explain the emotional and personal reasons for the subject area of this dissertation. I need now to address myself to the current situation in the church, particularly as it concerns 'media access' and the community outside the church. This area of study really began in my theological training and inquiry during my last year in college and my years at seminary. The 'servant church' became a theme in my vocabulary for speaking about the church, largely because it provided an alternative to my early experiences and understanding of the local church. The Church, theologically understood, is that community of people which continually gives up its own

life, both private and institutional, for the sake of those outside of the church community. The Church, believing that Christ has given his life for them, freely gives up its life for those in the world outside of the Church. The 'suffering servant', 'the worldly advocate', 'the liberator', and other theological identifications of the Christ and the Church became the means of responding to my experience of the Church as property-owner, trustee, manager, and maintainer. My stereotype of the church trustee could now be compared to an ideal of one who holds in trust and for another's usage, and who takes risks in so-doing. Here also was a theological response to the classrooms, offices, and grounds of the church which, between Sundays, stood empty and unused.

Parallel with this development in my theology came another view of media. In the late 60's, media was pictured by its most vocal advocates as power incarnate. It was a force that could "liberate" people if they had access to it. Two illustrations of this idea will suffice: First, it is often pointed out by political reporters and observers that anti-government forces in third-world countries have as their primary target during a revolt the seizure and control of the country's radio, television, and newspaper facilities. These targets appear at least as important to the rebel forces as do government offices, banks or foreign businesses. The media represents and is itself

a critical element of power in their bids for the allegiance of the people and the control of the country. Second, in the newly-popularized technology of cable television, struggles of major proportions in this country have emerged concerning community control and access. Groups in New York and San Francisco made headlines in 1970 when they called attention to their battles with giant corporations for control and access to the thousands of cable channels then being organized in their neighborhoods and cities.

It was soon apparent that the question of 'control and access' was a challenge and even a plea to the church for assistance. Indeed, church spokesmen, such as Bill Fore of the Broadcast and Film Commission, National Council of Churches, and George Conklin of the United Church of Christ, were already addressing the media on behalf of the church and speaking to the churches on behalf of the community and the media. They urged the churches to become involved as an agent and spokesman for community groups, adding their established presence in communities to the battle for public access.

While cable television is perhaps the most clear and immediate example for examining the relationship of the church to media, it should not obscure the less elaborate and less expensive technology which is available. Specifically, I am suggesting that such media as multiple projector and tape, sound collage, portable video, quick

and dirty materials, photography, simulations, and Super 8mm films are mediums which the church can creatively use to assist its ministry to community groups. These consumer technologies can fulfill community needs for communication and self-examination if the local church can understand its role as 'servant', 'representative', and 'mediator'. All of the above mediums are inexpensive enough to allow any community group or agency to make a self-statement to people in their communities and to help each other explore and define their immediate world. Inasmuch as the church has in its tradition the task of revealing and understanding the nature of man in the world, in past, present, and future experience, media access at all levels of technical sophistication now represents a vital ministry to the community, and in addition, a new effort to assist the church's attempts at self-understanding.

This dissertation is an attempt to provide a 'working' rationale for cable television's public access as a part of the church's ministry. This writer believes that the church's assistance to those individuals and groups needing media access is in line with its own traditions of 'servant', 'mediator', and interpreter of the Christian Understanding of Man. Likewise, this paper makes the argument for good stewardship of the church's own resources of facilities, finances, and people.

Chapter one is a very brief overview of the church's contact with film, radio, and television programming in past and present years. It is intended to orient the reader to past attitudes of the church concerning the mass media. There is also a very short section introducing the recent work of the church with cable television.

Chapter two is a 'Primer on Cable Television'. It introduces the reader to the technological developments that make cable a flexible, inexpensive, and accessible medium and it provides some illustrations of programming that are both visionary and practical. A short list of cable-related problems to which the church could uniquely speak is also included.

Chapter three briefly outlines the role of Christology in shaping church programs and self-understanding, and presents in cursory form, the approaches of three theologians to the problem of christological development. The work of Emil Brunner, James Gustafson, and Dorothee Soelle will be considered here.

Chapter four proposes a number of tasks for local churches to undertake in their consideration of a community-based program with cable television. It examines the relationship of the local church to the community and suggests a way of approaching a ministry of 'mediation' and 'representation' between the local community and the cable television industry. In addition, this chapter suggests a

few things that the local church should not do in developing a program with the cable.

Chapter five is a statement, and often a very personal one, concerning the role that the church's school--the seminary--should play in assisting the local church and community in the development of a cable system and cable programming. It is this writer's belief that the School of Theology at Claremont could provide a very critically-needed ministry of education and of vision in preparing people and communities to creatively use the communications resource that cable makes possible. This chapter is very specific in proposing what could be done and is based on the experience of the author on that campus and in working with cable television systems.

A dissertation, written at the culmination of a degree program at a Protestant seminary, should perform three major functions.

First, it should demonstrate the writer's ability to integrate skills and learning from several fields of study and reflection. For this dissertation, Christology is brought into interface with current communication studies and the associated technology. This writer will attempt to demonstrate why the local church and the seminary which trains people for the local church, should be actively involved in the present and future development of the cable television industry.

Second, such a dissertation should be about the church. It should seek out key elements in a field of study and relate them to the mission and self-understanding of the church. To paraphrase an STC professor's words, "... the dissertation should be an inter-disciplinary task and look at the church's view of _____, or the church's understanding of _____, or the Church and _____." The dissertation is, therefore, a relation-developing task. It seeks out lines of order, communications, and responsibility for the mission of the church. Under consideration in this dissertation are the church's evaluation of and response to the emerging technology and possibility of cable television.

Third, a graduate dissertation should contribute significantly to the available knowledge and reflection in the area of the church's self-understanding. It can point out new directions, or re-focus old ones. It may re-affirm old ties and responsibilities or lay out paths to new areas of work and study. The graduate dissertation is one of the key tools by which the seminary does the theological work of the church. The task here has been to develop guidelines for the local church's participation in CATV and to reflect on how the person and work of the One who is called Christ shapes that participation.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE CHURCH AND MEDIA

"The role of interpreting the meaning of life
was once largely carried by the Church."
- John Bachman¹

The above statement carries within it both a reflective summary and a prophetic challenge to the contemporary church. The author speaks of the broadcast media as worlds in which the church has often been a foreigner and an awkward tourist. It is an area of concern in which the church has been more diversely represented than any other. The media are a potential tool for ministry which the church has never mastered, though it has often used them in creative and imaginative ways.

Bachman is correct in implying that the Church's historical position as interpreter, and shaper, of man's self-understanding has changed. He, like many observers of the broadcast media, realizes that radio and television have much stronger claims on man's value-forming and world-viewing apparatus than does the Church's theology or its practice of a spiritual community. Whether we believe that such media may be used as tools for the Church's purposes of communicating "the Good News" and of pointing the way to creation of the kingdom, or that the media are really

¹John Bachman, The Church in the World of Radio and Television (New York: Association Press, 1960), p. 26.

"extensions of man's own natural sense experiencing apparatus", we must acknowledge that the media is influential in all man's reflective and creative activities and, therefore, must be a subject of continuous dialogue and interaction with the Church.

Since the early 40's many diverse religious communities and organizations have engaged in numerous experiments and adventures with programming in the broadcast media. The bulk of this work's illustrative material is from the Protestant community, particularly the Methodist Church. By broadcast media, we are limiting discussion to Radio and Television and programs prepared directly for usage on these mediums. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the approach, style, and attitudes of the Church's work with broadcast media and the various programs mentioned are presented to illustrate those approaches.

THE CHURCH AND FILM

The first medium to be examined is the motion picture film. It has often been technical pragmatism to produce films for use on television as well as in the classrooms and sanctuaries of the local churches. Because much of the church's sensitivity to media was shaped by the growth of its work in film, it is essential that this area be examined first.

Entertainment Film.

It is ironic that during the preparation of this chapter, newspapers were carrying the small news item that the National Council of Churches has dropped its Film Awards Nomination Panel which has been in existence since 1963. The termination of this program is another indication that the Church's position with respect to the media is changing. The Film Awards Panel had been organized as a means for the church, through its national offices, to comment upon, sanction, and perhaps help to shape the directions and production of the motion picture industry. It was not an attempt at coercion of the film industry by the Church as had been the goal in earlier efforts. Rather, the Panel's recommendations to the Broadcast and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches attempted to give church members a guide to critique and discriminate its film viewing.

The awards were to be made in categories and, since 1963, there have been three different guiding statements by which awards were made. Examination of each of these is a direct and remarkably clear means of learning the church's approach to the media.

The awards may be given to American films of outstanding artistic merit that:

1. Portray American life and culture in the light of Christian ideals.
2. Present family life in keeping with Christian principles.

3. Show the application of Christian ideals to the growth of personality in children.
4. Treat religious subject matter, whether biblical, historical, or contemporary, with accuracy, pertinence and moral value.
5. Reflect the predicament and hope of man.²

While most reporters indicate that the first years of the panel's work were undistinguished and devoted mostly to internal self-perception, a most important conclusion can be drawn from this statement. That is that the overriding approach of the panel was to award films that were 'Christian' in orientation. "Such films", reports Tom Trotter, member and chairman of the panel in later years, "were simply not being made."³ The awards given under these guidelines came under the 4th and 5th categories. 'Becket' was cited for its "religious subject matter", and 'Fail Safe' (atomic annihilation) and 'Fate Is the Hunter' (courage in airline pilots) were awarded as reflections of the predicament of man.

In 1965, the categories were revised primarily to eliminate the unrealistic and somewhat presumptuous criteria of 'Christian' films, although the same sense was enclosed in an introductory phrase, "...within the perspective of the Christian faith".

1. Portray with honesty and compassion the human situation in which man is caught in tension between his attempt to realize his full potential of his humanity and his tendency to destroy that humanity.

²F. Thomas Trotter, "The Church Moves towards Film Discrimination", Religion in Life (Summer 1969), 264-276.

³Ibid., p. 265

2. Portray human society and its cultural environment in such a way as to enhance understanding of the family of man in its richness and variety.
3. Treat religious subject matter, whether biblical, historical, or contemporary, with perceptiveness, accuracy, and pertinence.
4. Bring qualities of imagination, beauty, and honesty to subject matter appropriate for children.
5. Provide exceptional entertainment value appropriate for family viewing.⁴

Although revision softened the limitation of 'Christian' for qualifying a film, it did not remove the stipulation of 'American' in its opening statement. The categories were broadened to indicate "human society" and the "human situation", perhaps a contradiction as a political/cultural boundary had already been set. Broader qualities of life were suggested, eg beauty, honesty, richness, and variety. Most importantly, the concern for portrayal and communication of the predicament and hope of the human situation was maintained as a key element. It was to remain the key for the life of the panel's awards.

The final guiding statement was a much more realistic look at the validity of such awards - reflecting an honest reappraisal of the panel's non-existent ability to have an effect on the making of films.

....may make awards annually to films of outstanding merit that, within the perspective of the Christian faith, also

1. Portray with honesty and compassion the human condition - including human society in its cultural environment - depicting man in

⁴Ibid., p. 267

- the tension between his attempt to realize the full potential of his humanity and his attempt to distort that humanity; and
2. Portray his vitality, tragedy, humor, and variety of life in such a way as to provide entertainment value appropriate for family viewing and general audience appeal; and
 3. Present subject matter which, in terms of form and content, will fire the mental, moral, and existential development of youth.⁵

Part of this statement's increased realism is reflected in the decision of the panel to include foreign films for consideration. Additionally, the panel was asked to suggest age categories of appropriate viewing for each film. Note that the "human condition " and man's predicament between his hope and his self-destruction remains as a key guideline. Films selected under the second and third sets of guidelines included ' The Pawnbroker ', ' Nothing but a Man ', ' Patch of Blue ', ' Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe? ', ' The War Game', and 'A Man for All Seasons '. Historians of the panel's work never tire of pointing out that 'Pawnbroker' was criticized by church membership for its nudity scene, 'Patch of Blue' was attacked for its interracial kiss, and 'Virginia Wolfe' for its 'moral stench'.⁶ During this period, the greatest bathrobe drama of all time came to the screen in ' The Greatest Story Ever Told ', an inaccurate, extravagant, presumptuous attempt at portrayal of the life of Jesus. The panel and the church members changed places, as the 1965 awards did not list ' The

⁵Ibid., p. 268.

⁶Ibid., pp. 272-273.

Greatest' and the film was a bomb at the market place, giving panel critics the change to attack the Broadcast and Film Commission for misplaced allegiance.

'The Greatest Story' also posed an additional approach for the church's relationship with media. It appears in retrospect that church leaders promised to deliver the church audience to the theaters as a kind of fair trade for the industry paying attention to religious subjects. The panel's decision not to award the film put a devastating end to this kind of bribery approach, at least as far as the motion picture industry was concerned. This experience appears to have been instructive in shaping the church's dealings with radio and television. Cooperation with industry-generated invitations and a critical self-examination of its own goals and abilities were to be the keynotes of later church media policies.

It may easily be seen that the main and lasting focus of the panel's guidelines were that the film industry deal honestly and directly with what it meant to be a human being. The religious community had its own terminology and conceptual framework for this goal, based on traditional Christian understandings of the nature of good and evil, the finiteness of man, and the infinite goodness and capability of God. A second result is that the churches abandoned both formal and informal pressures to make the film industry produce "Christian" or even "religious" films.

This was simply realism coming to the church's perception and, as a result, the church could turn its full attention to evaluating films for their effectiveness and honesty in communicating truths about man and his societies.

The elimination of the Awards Panel paralleled the establishment within the film industry of its own attempt at self-regulation. Church leaders working with film industry leaders were instrumental in helping develop the motion picture rating code. Once again, the church moved out of the role in which it attempted to impose values and criteria and it moved into the position of helping man and his institutions develop a sense of self-responsibility for themselves and the world in which they live.

Much of the church's workings as a panel rating films did not percolate down to the local church and its membership. More effective in this regard were individual publications and articles reviewing films in church publications and making materials available for the study of film in the local church. A quick review of several of these newsletters and regular columns in publications will help us to understand the church's approach to media for the local church membership.

The Methodist Publication, The Christian Advocate, regularly features two columns concerning the entertainment film and other short films for local church use. Under the heading 'Films of Interest', current feature films are

reviewed, usually by staff members of the magazine, notably Mr. James Wall, associate editor. His January 11, 1968 review of 'The Graduate' will illustrate the approach which provides relevant critiques along 'Christian' guidelines.

...But 'The Graduate' is much more than a plot film. It is a work of cinematic art which presents a vision of contemporary life through a mixture of sharp comedy sketches, devastating attacks on suburban apathy and effective use of Simon and Garfunkel's folk-rock compositions.

...The graduate of the title is a 20-year old honor student who arrives home from college with a vacant stare and a sense of unrelatedness to the superficial, affluent world of his parents. The tone is set as the Simon and Garfunkel tune, 'Sounds of Silence' underscores Benjamin's flight home to Los Angeles, an evocative comment that announces the film's theme: people live with one another without being present to anyone.

...Nichols' direction highlights facial reactions, a technique that minimizes surroundings and emphasizes faces that love and hate without emotion.

...The laughter of this film is misleading, for the aftereffect is extremely depressing. Nichols has provided an unrelenting comment on what happens to us when we substitute routine for love and demand confirmity rather than humanity.

...Recommendation: Subject matter is so unconventional that it is not recommended for persons who prefer films that avoid depiction of immorality. ...College students and young adults will find this is a film that feels their dilemma and says it like it is.⁷

What the reader is presented is a pastoral evaluation of films playing in a local theater. It is an aid to

⁷James M. Wall, "Films of Interest", Christian Advocate, XII (January 11, 1968), 19.

the church pastoral leaders who take seriously the need for moral and spiritual guidance of the flock. It is neither a scripture-based prescription nor a simple application of moral good/bad law. It is heavily oriented to sociological problems such as the generation gap and family communication, such problems being addressed by the critic's understanding of the nature of good and evil and of the Christian understanding of man. Of course, any film review is colored by the particular critic or reviewer, and a different critic might well have reached different conclusions both about the values of the film and the Christian interpretations of its meaning. Nevertheless, the application of Christian understandings and values about man and his world may be applied in such manner as demonstrated above.

The second column, appearing irregularly in The Christian Advocate is devoted to summaries and quick evaluations of short films for use in local church programs of education, entertainment, and social issues. Some illustrations will suffice:

A TIME FOR BURNING - An actual report of what happened to one pastor and his congregation when an attempt was made to establish racial dialogue in a transitional urban area. Fresh and revealing, this Lutheran-made film is present for on-the-spot discussions in living rooms, board meetings, automobiles, hallways, and barber shops - in short, every place a lightweight camera could travel unobtrusively. Low-keyed, the resistance to racial co-operation is of the subtle 'the time is not right' variety. Good discussion provoker and also a fine example of documentary film-making. (Contemporary 50min. \$25)

HANGMAN - Excellent animated illustration of Maurice Ogden poem, read by Herschel Bernardi. Poem begins, 'Into our town the Hangman came,' and proceeds to examine what happens when a community is complacent to the persecution of others. Poem's power is connection with unusual images suggests two viewings by the same group, before and after discussion. Could also be used in connection with 'A Time for Burning' and 'We Mean to Stay'.
(Contemporary 12 min. \$12.50)

OVERATURE - Effective use of stills and moving shots against a moving background of Beethoven's 'Egmont Overture', produced by the United Nations on the theme of what the UN can do and is doing to improve life in a world at war and in want.
(Contemporary 9 min. \$4)⁸

The intent of these short reviews is two-fold.

First, the reader is invited to become more sophisticated about the film medium via illustrations of various forms and techniques mentioned in the review. Second, possible applications in the local church and community are suggested.

In the last 20 years, there have been several films produced for general public theaters which the church has genuinely taken to heart as being striking representations of the Christian message. In 'Requiem for a Heavyweight', the church followers of 'Christ-figure' imagery were treated to a full range of very strong visual parallels to the passion and crucifixion of Christ. For many church-goers, it was the first example, and indication, that the theater

⁸James M. Wall, "Short Film Summaries", Christian Advocate, XII (January 11, 1968), 19-20.

could speak of traditional religious questions and affirmations. It has worked, and reworked, like any new innovation in the church, and now deserves a quiet place in the study of media and religion.

A second film, 'Mickey One' is more illustrative of feature films in which the church could find a meaningful interpretation of "the human condition" and the Christian response. Several reviews, only one from a church publication, can illustrate the potential of this film for communicating the Christian Understanding of Man:

The story of 'Mickey One' is a simple, contemporary entertainment, on its primary level. Mickey, a stand-up comic, has gotten into the Mob for a substantial amount of money through gambling. To work off the debt, they buy up his contract and he is forced to work in Mob-owned clubs. But the constant fear, the constant surveillance, finally weigh on him to a crushing point where he flees, knowing if they catch him, they will kill him for welshing. He runs interminably, becoming paranoid in the process....he manages to escape again, and is on the verge of running again, when he develops backbone, stands, and finds....in that Kafkaesque logic of human unpredictability - that they are done with him; he is off the hook; free.

...In one shot, Mickey, large in the foreground, stares into a destruction tunnel at the car-squash yard where a vehicle suddenly bursts into a bouquet of flame. As this shot fades, and the car, tunnel, and flames vanish, leaving Mickey alone corporeal in the foreground, the incoming shot super-imposes and we see Mickey in the background walking towards himself, up a dark alley. It is a very poignant and subtle way of showing a man literally looking at himself, studying his past, contemplating his future.⁹

⁹Harlan, Ellison, "Mickey One" (a review, mimeographed)

From the Los Angeles Times:

...As it seemed before, Penn's major achievement is the timely way in which he poses the compelling problem of distinguishing between fears real and imagined. He does not go as far out as Antonioni in 'Blow Up' in which the murder could just be a figment of the photographer's imagination. Beatty, drunk as he was at the time, knows he did something wrong. He simply cannot tell, or find out either, whether he is being pursued or not. Another viewing of the picture also yields still another level of meaning, and that is as a timeless allegory about the price of art being life itself.¹⁰

From the Christian Advocate:

...Mickey One was the best film I saw at the festival because it utilized its medium artistically in order to present the personal vision of the director....

The basic theme is a statement from Jeremiah: 'Is there any word from the Lord?' Mickey One is a nightclub entertainer who struggles against unknown forces, both metaphysical and immediate, though their nature is never clear. Kafkaesque in mood, the film juggles time and symbolism with such dexterity that some film education is required to get its full impact. Mickey's attempt to hear a word from the Lord (though he would never express his search this way) leads to a climactic conclusion that will force church audiences to reconsider their own understanding of God's word.

Recommended for adults and older youth.¹¹

The three reviews present an interesting contrast, not in points of view, but in background of interpretation. The Christian understanding of man frames the same events and situations of the film, but in such a way as will allow

¹⁰Kevin Thomas, "Mickey One Due on Los Feliz Screen", Los Angeles Times, (December 19, 1967), Part IV, p. 15.

¹¹James M. Wall, "Mickey One", Christian Advocate, XII, (April 4, 1968).

the unique understanding of Man and God in history to be seen. It is important to remember that this is not a "Christian" film in the sense that it was scripted to present an understanding of the Christian faith. It may be called "Christian" in that to many Christian believers it presents an honest portrayal of man's situation. It is seldom that a critic, or reviewer, may invoke a scriptural illustration which relates so directly to a film. That Mr. Wall has done so is an illustration, not of proof-texting, but of a way of doing theology with media as a text. In this exegesis, the context is given a contemporary setting so that it may be more easily understood by laymen--the intended audience of this exegesis. Obviously, the interpretive work must go beyond the celluloid limits, and in so doing, may allow the film to give new insight to the scriptural passage.

Films from the Church.

To this point, we have limited our discussion to examination of the film as a product of the professional movie-making communities. Equally professional has been the work of film-makers within the churches. Every main-line denomination has an in-house organization for the development of curriculum materials and broadcast media. In addition, there are several independent film companies whose productions are largely intended for use in the church.

At the School of Theology at Claremont in December 1973, the first annual Current Church Cinema Festival was held. The films presented at that time are a good cross-section of available current materials for local church use. We will look briefly both at the films and at the agencies which produced them.

Probably the strongest and most active of the independent film producers for church use is the Franciscan Communications Center of Los Angeles whose 16mm films are distributed by Association Films. The Franciscan community of directors, artists, producers, and marketing personnel are a unique combination of film-producing talent and professional sensitivity to educational, social, and spiritual issues facing the contemporary church. Of particular interest is the work of the Center in interpreting, cinematically, the parables and major theme elements of the New Testament. Coming from the opposite point of view as did the reviewer of Mickey One, the Franciscans translate scriptural teachings, values, and experience into film terms and structure. A pair of examples will illustrate this approach to film and the religious communications enterprise.

'Legend of Good and Evil' is a mysterious film in its stylistic intercutting between two and three different visual images. The viewer is witness to the Mardi Gras, a small shack with a young mother in the Bayou country of

Louisiana, and a young couple whose action is almost at random. The intercutting between these scenes is a film representation of the Incarnational view of history and sketches out the human predicament of the temptation, sin, the fall, and redemption. The wide range of images is a suggestion of the incarnation of God in the daily and commonplace events of life. The film is directed, and largely edited, by Tony Frangakis. On several occasions of the film's viewing he has encouraged its audience to draw their own meanings and themes from the film and has continually refused to contribute a single theme or interpretation of his own. Thus, what is essentially a personal statement of belief and understanding for the director is presented in such a way as to encourage laymen and clergy to derive their own understandings of the Incarnation and of the Christian understanding of history. The film is now circulated under the title 'Epiphania', a title which, for church usage, contributes greatly to its interpretation.

'Water and Spirit' is a meditational film on the theme of baptism. It uses visual, and highly symbolic, images of water as the source of life, renewal, power, and death. The Franciscan Center lists the film as a meditation resource and indicates that it might well be used during a formal worship service as a visual stimulant, or as an inspirational interpretation of this theme in the life of the church. The Franciscans have given a great

deal of creative thought to producing resources that can be integrated into, and supportive of, present worship and educational practices of the local church. The importance of this direction in production is significant because it seeks not to make media a specialized and isolated tool to be plugged in and out of a "normal" program. Rather, the film, and the Center's other audio-visual tools, are prepared with a mind to working side by side with choir, clergy, congregation in creating an atmosphere of worship and learning.

Clearly the most successful film producer, in terms of a mass audience appeal and circulation, has been the Paulist-related group, called Insight Films. Their weekly Sunday program of the same name is a showpiece and a witness to the success of this organization, now headed by Father Keiser of the Paulist order. 'Insight' can attribute much of its success from its willingness and ability to produce productions on an equal footing with the network production units. The films feature name actors, from secular feature stardom; the writers and directors are men and women with established reputations in the film community; and the audience staying power of the series would make many producers envious.

Almost all of the Insight programs appearing first on local television are stories of human conflict and problems which are usually resolved by a direct application

of Christian teachings and values--although the statement of such is seldom as direct. More important is that the series has proven effective in dealing with current, and often controversial subject matter, bringing subjects to local churchmen who would not otherwise know of them. Unfortunately, the frequent result of such subjects and their treatment is a stereotype of both people and problems. This is partly due to common television restraints such as time (30 minutes) and budget (inadequate to do sufficient research and scripting). One such program is 'Eye of the Camel':

A dramatic exploration of the revolutionary ferment now sweeping the Church in Latin America. Fr. Luis, a radical young priest, filled with the theology of liberation, convinces his exploited parishioners that they must take charge of their own lives. He helps them to form a labor union and demand higher wages and better working conditions. The Bishop of the city is fond of Fr. Luis, but is concerned about the peace of the community....is afraid that Fr. Luis program will result in violence...and urges (him) to be patient. ...Violence results and Fr. Luis is martyred. Deeply shaken, the Bishop moves to the barrio, identifies himself with the poor, and makes his own the cause of their liberation.¹²

My own viewing of this film has suggested to me that strong stereotypes exist of both Fr. Luis as a "humble priest of a small parish" and of his "flock". The story line has the advantage of introducing some thinking about

¹² 'The Eye of the Camel' (Insight Film Series, a mimeographed description: Pacific Palisades, CA: Paulist Productions, 1973)

the Third World and of Liberation, but the viewer will go far beyond the 30 minutes of viewing if he is to discover the work and theology of the Church in Latin America.

Among the denominational production units must first be mentioned the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches. This inter-denominational agency has often pioneered the way for the church's relationships with media's masses. Two films will illustrate the work of this agency.

'The Parable' was produced by the BFC for the Protestant Pavilion at the World's Fair in Toronto. It was, and is, a strong, vivid, and surprising visualization of the work of the Christ in allegorical form. A white-faced clown in a traveling circus substitutes himself for a Black man on a dunking stool, a circus roustabout carrying heavy water buckets, and for a trio of circus performers who act as marionettes in the hand of a cruel puppeteer. The clown is literally "hung" on the puppet control wires and both the puppeteer as the oppressor and the circus performers as the oppressed are given a new lease on life as the circus moves on. The last scene of this 28 min. film, shows a new (?) clown following the circus wagons down the road to a new performance.

'The Antkeeper' is a similar allegorical film on the life of Jesus. Its message is simple and clear to both symbolic and historical interpretation.

A spokesman for the BFC once speculated that the reason the National Council of Churches' agency used allegory and symbolic forms so much in their resources is because it was the only means of getting NCC members to agree on the production! Since the early 'Parable', the BFC has produced fewer films, relinquishing an early technical expertise to member denominations who were forming their own in-house organs. It must be said of the NCC that they clearly understood the need to make their productions outstanding in both technical quality and in sophistication of message and interpretation. 'The Parable' won several awards and has been used as often in secular institutional life as in the church.

The production units of individual denominations tend to have a clearly different focus and different priorities than do either the independent production houses or the inter-denominational agencies. Denominational structure has emphasized the service functions of their media agencies. The publishing houses, the news services, research and statistical agents, and the television, radio, and film agencies have usually had as their priority the preparation of materials which support in-house denominational goals. These have been both general subjects such as structure and organization of the church, tithing, the church year, the nature of the ministry, etc. and periodic theme presentations such as evangelism, missions, social

witness, and other priorities decided by the national governing bodies of the church. The immediate effect of these in-house use guidelines is a limitation in their usefulness to groups beyond denominational lines. Of course, this is not an absolute limit and many, many of the "house" films serve programs and uses far beyond the original scope of the creating agencies. Most denominational film libraries have a rather large collection of films, most of which are out-of-date and useless in their present form.

The presence of out-dated materials in conference and church media libraries suggests a possible creative activity that may restore the usefulness (and investment) of these films and provide a valuable learning resource for present curriculum needs. The film 'Rim of Tomorrow' was produced for a Missions Emphasis Year by the National Council of Churches Council on Missions Education (NCCCME in denominational jargon). Generally, it is a well-done film from the technical side, but it does suffer from a stereotyped view of foreign peoples and an out-of-date understanding of what "mission" could be in the life of the Church. A local church or seminary task force could convert the footage of the film, combined with either new footage, and a new soundtrack, or perhaps just cutting out dated material, to a visual aid which would be more in keeping with current missions theology. For example, the strong segments of the film dealing with population

problems and existing agricultural underdevelopment could be used in a new context of Third World development which focuses on our current knowledge of industrial and economic exploitation by the Western Powers. Put more simply, a Nigerian farmer's poor wheat yield may be seen in the light of balance of trade problems and favored nation clauses, the changing of which would be more beneficial than the raising of funds for a new tractor and seed.

Two publications sponsored by the National Council of Churches deserve mention here in relationship to the Church and film. The first, Film Information, is a monthly four-to-six page newsletter containing reviews and evaluations of current commercial motion pictures. It is specifically aimed at pastors, parents, and teachers, but is a general tool for film buffs. In its own words, it is "...written from a Christian perspective by leading theologians, educators, and critics actively involved in the film media."¹³ For purposes of this chapter, it must be called to attention that "written from a Christian perspective" is descriptive of only the most general kind of approach and probably offers assurance of its content only to critically unsophisticated audiences, in either theology or film. Nonetheless, this is the most useful tool for film evaluation any church agency has produced yet.

¹³'Film Information' (A printed brochure. New York: Broadcast and Film Commission, National Council of Churches, 1971)

The Audio-Visual Resource Guide, also published by the NCC, is a collection of film reviews categorized by subject matter (eg Paul and the Church, Family Life, Missions, etc.) and by alphabetic titles. In constant revision, the 475 page paperback is now in its ninth edition and provides a critical reference for "churches, schools, and community organizations." It is issue-oriented and reviews are directed at helping readers find visual expression and statement of contemporary social problems and historical re-enactments of people and events. The Guide also includes reviews of filmstrips, records, slides, tapes, and other A-V media.

In examining the film medium and the church's approach and response, there has been no attempt to examine films made specifically for television broadcast. Such films will be dealt with in the third segment of this chapter. Additionally, there is no assumption of completeness in this examination--only an attempt to illustrate the pluralistic use of films in the life of the church. Such basic thematic elements of usage as may appear will be summarized at the end of this chapter.

THE CHURCH AND RADIO

The institutional church has long since grasped the understanding that mass media could be an important tool in the task of preaching the Gospel. If only the use of

radio advertising for "religious services", it was understood that radio, and later television, could extend a church's congregation and its sphere of influence. We soon learned that a "radio ministry" was an extension of the pulpit and we offered thereby a particular ministry to shut-ins. This new congregation included the crippled and those confined to beds or in institutions, or even those without transportation. For many clergy and laymen alike, the radio ministry was a replacement for "really being in church". This remark is not made cynically, but with the very realistic viewpoint that for many churchmen, being "in church" is a full and complete statement of church opportunities and responsibilities. If we understand that church membership is hopefully only an outward sign of an inward growing and strengthening relationship in a Christian community, we must also acknowledge that both radio ministries and mere attendance fall short of the best and most fruitful work of the Church. Nonetheless, for many, the development of the radio ministry provided a link with congregational life and worship.

Much of the simplicity involved in the early use of radio by the churches has since passed. The church has come to understand the particular character and potential of radio as a communications medium and an art form. In a period of radio history when soap operas had demonstrated programming of intrinsic (?) value in itself and not just

as a substitute for a theatrical performance, listeners and performers came to realize that radio could set its own standards for program and personalities. New artists and new story settings were found particularly suitable for radio. One can locate and read the scripts of such radio entertainment favorites as 'Boston Blackie', 'Amos and Andy', or 'The Thin Man'. Entertainment which focused, and soon capitalized on, voices and sound effects became daily fare for millions of people.

The newsmakers likewise came to radio. In later years, the "fireside chats" of Franklin Roosevelt and the broadcasts from debates at the United Nations marked the political and social importance of radio as an instantaneous medium of political and social education. Radio gave a close identification to current and well-known figures. One can only imagine the excitement and interest of a small town family in the plains states as they gathered around a kitchen radio to hear Roosevelt announce the events of Pearl Harbor and describe it as "a day that will live in infamy". A president whom most people would never meet or even see in person could, in a most personal manner, talk to and "counsel" individual Americans of the times in which they ("we") all lived.

As for the church, the first religious broadcasts on radio occurred in the early 1920's from Calvary Episcopal

Church, Pittsburgh, by Rev. Edwin Van Etten, over KDKA.¹⁴ Before Federal control emerged to license and regulate the radio stations, and thereby supply impetus for the formation of radio networks, many churches obtained time on local radio stations for preaching services. Among the first programs to emerge as a regular religious format was the National Radio Pulpit beginning in May of 1923. The 'Pulpit' was the first religious program to appear on a "network" and was produced in NBC's local studio in New York.¹⁵ Among its sponsoring agencies was the NBC Religious Advisory Council which laid down the following program policies:

- 1) religious groups should receive free time, but pay for their production costs;
- 2) religious broadcasting should be non-denominational;
- 3) use one man for continuity;
- 4) use a preaching format, avoiding matters of doctrine and controversial subjects.¹⁶

Among the many popular figures who first came to the radio microphone were the circuit evangelists. These were men and women who recognized in radio a means to reach a wider audience. They were masterful radio personalities having learned their art and skills in the open-tent revivals. Preaching for them was a fine blend of

¹⁴William Fore "A Short History of Religious Broadcasting," in A. Wm. Bluem, Religious Television Programs (New York: Hastings House, 1969), pp. 203-204.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 204.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 204-205.

immense energy, a wide range of both tone and volume, and incredible endurance.

Many of the "radio preachers" became regulars with their particular station and program format. For thirteen years Dr. S. Parkes Cadman occupied the National Radio Pulpit and upon his death was replaced by Dr. Ralph Sockman who continued until 1963--twenty-seven years! Endurance seemed to be the order of the radio ministry--an endurance formed largely by a single mode of presentation--great preaching. During the first 50 years of the National Radio Pulpit's broadcasts, there is only one program which was not a single-speaker, preaching service. The religious backers understood the radio microphone as an extension of their pulpits. No change was required in the Sunday routine. The early years of broadcasting originated in the studios but as broadcast equipment improved, and many leading churches became "wired", the services were broadcast directly from the pulpit on Sunday morning. The phrase "we now welcome our radio audience" became as common as the doxology or the anthem, usually occurring between the two events.

The religious community, usually under the leadership or goading of the fundamentalists, expanded the scope and style of religious broadcasting. Several examples are currently available, having changed little since their basic design in the 20's and 30's. Amie Sample McPherson's

'Gospel Hour'--a combination of music, scripture, and preaching and Norman Vincent Peale's "meditations"--a sermon (lecture) discussion format have been the staples in the religious radio diet. Some creativity in the educational use of radio can be seen in the Radio Bible Class by M. R. DeHaan which signed up listeners to receive home-study material which complemented radio lectures on the Bible.

Shorter, meditation programs became popular during the early 50's. Such shorts as 'Faith in Our Time' and 'Gems of Thought' employed a single speaker reading from Scripture or from inspirational writings.¹⁷

Religious "news" or religious comment on the news appeared as a short, usually syndicated, series. While such programs as 'Pulpit' and 'The Art of Living' offered pastoral comment on current topics, the syndicated and pre-recorded 'Good News' offered listeners commentators on such subjects as world missions, current evangelistic crusades, meetings of church bodies (!), and even live on-the-street interviews about religious subjects. The latter program was significant in that it offered a change in program format. The development of radio personalities was brought about by the sermon, lecture, and meditation formats of the overwhelming majority of religious broadcasting. 'Good News' offered listeners panels, and interviews on a

¹⁷Ibid., p. 207.

regular basis. By the mid-50's, listeners could hear 'Pilgrimage'--a program of pastoral counseling with a wide variety of subjects; 'Let There Be Light'--an offering of radio drama; and 'Thy Kingdom Come'--a series of musically-based meditations.¹⁸

Creative forces in national denominational offices began to re-think and re-imagine new roles for the church and radio. In the late 50's and early 60's, the "talk show" emerged as a successful staple in the church's programming. A format with variations of live guests, taped interviews, and telephone participation, it captured the imagination and needs of both listeners and sponsors. The Methodist/TRAFCO program 'TalkBack' was particularly successful as an open-mike forum on current issues.

The preceding illustrations should be sufficient detail concerning the radio and church's perception of it in ministry. Church leaders and professional communicators were reflecting about the nature of radio and about the church's self-perception in relation to it. In 1954, under the sponsorship of the BFC/NCC (Broadcast and Film Commission/National Council of Churches) Clayton Griswold and Charles Schmitz published Broadcasting Religion : A Manual for Local Use. This was not the first text examining and organizing the church's use of media, but it was a particularly useful resource for the local church and it

¹⁸Ibid., p. 208.

received wide distribution in church libraries and pastor's studies. I can remember a badly-worn copy at the Methodist Church in Phoenix where I grew up. The written notes on the margins listed local stations and possible programs that some pastor or layman was hopeful would be welcome by broadcasting.

Griswold and Schmitz summarized experience. That is, they collected and set down the experiences of many churches in dealing with broadcast programming. The experience was practical and included such items as good microphone posture, how to stay out of the way in a radio or television studio, and repeated innumeration about the goals and opportunities of ministry through broadcasting. A look at these goals can prove useful:

- 1...to win listeners and viewers to the Christian faith through instruction, programs for those unfamiliar with church practice and teaching, and programs directed at particular groups such as children, the sick, and the aged;
2. To build a stronger Christian family;
3. To make known the Christian Gospel everywhere;
4. To help different religious groups understand each other;
- (and added parenthetically)
5. To enlighten the misinformed with factual information about Christian life today.¹⁹

The goals are evangelistic, pure and simple. To win listeners and make known the Gospel, everywhere and factually, is a traditional and over-accepted goal of the church.

¹⁹Clayton Griswold and Charles Schmitz, Broadcasting Religion: A Manual for Local Church Use (New York: NCC/BFC, 1954), p. 6.

Goals four and five could easily be interpreted as a very particularistic set of instructions aimed at a particular situation, perhaps that of a growing ecumenical encounter. While they may appear paternalistic, they are, in fact, well within historical precepts of evangelistic practice. This is further reflected in an earlier part of the text as the authors write, "Radio and Television enable us to go through closed doors to our friends. Radio and Television can help us to reach strangers and even enemies."²⁰

The development of a "radio audience" for most churches was associated with a rather vague understanding that through the medium of radio the congregation was somehow sharing in an ongoing ministry. The morning reminder of this usually occurred immediately after the doxology and before the anthem and went something like, "...and now we join our radio audience, our friends listening and worshipping with us at home." A personal reflection seems proper here. In the church where I grew up and served as audio-visual technician, I was assigned the responsibility of phoning the radio station, thus opening the telephone line, and notifying them when to begin taping. My instructions were to call them in time to record the whole anthem and then the sermon, and, if any time remained, the closing hymn. After the service, I called the station and gave

²⁰Ibid., p. 5.

them the timing, telling them where to begin the thirty minute broadcast in order to get the "entire" sermon. It was ideal if I could begin with the anthem, hear the total sermon, and close out the broadcast during the final hymn, and usually began in the middle of the anthem in order to get ALL the sermon. Sometimes, we even eliminated the anthem from the radio altogether. The priority was clearly with the spoken word of the pastor and the principles were never changed. There were occasions when the pastor talked longer than his 28:30 minutes and was cut off in mid-sentence as the radio station switched to Sunday baseball!!! My point is that radio was the extension of the pulpit and no consideration was given to a different time sequence or form which would be more useful for radio listeners.

Another writer, John W. Bachman, in 1960 produced a book which provided a valuable critique of radio and television and set down guidelines by which a church could examine its own radio programming as well as the programming regularly carried by the broadcast stations. The book, The Church in the World of Radio and Television, was written as a contribution to a study and recommendation panel established by the National Council of Churches to guide future and current religious programming by NCC member denominations. Two statements marked the strongest of church perceptions of the media during this period:

The church's awareness of the influence of media...probably became clear the first time a commission meeting was scheduled opposite Gun-smoke!²¹

...the role of interpreting the meaning of life was once largely carried by the church...²²

The statements need no interpretation. The church had to cope with the immediate and over-powering presence of a value-forming and value-shaping institution which extended far beyond any means of communication that the church historically or presently possessed. The pulpit and the pew were simply no match for the microphone and the camera! But this comparison is with regard to speaking-hearing-seeing communications as they transfer information. It is not an evaluation of the media or the church's effectiveness in the inter-personal life and growth of a congregation. The Church is a community, a gathered community worshipping together. By definition, therefore, the media cannot create a Church as community, rather it can only transfer the raw information as heard by the microphone and viewed by the camera lens. It is not out of the question to consider the possibility that media can "create" community by its handling of ideas and treatment artistically of values. This does not appear to ever have been the attempt or goal of church programming to this date.

Bachman has suggested a set of purposes for the church's responsibility in broadcasting. In agreement with

²¹Bachman, p. 21.

²²Ibid., p. 26.

the goals suggested by Griswold and Schmitz, he calls for "Christian" broadcasting consisting of:

- ...1. Climate-creation :Institutional - plowing the soil for church attendance;
- 2. Climate-creation :Ideological - awaken or stimulate a need for some(one) or something (Christ). To create a tension between what is and what ought to be;
- 3. Worship programs (currently dubious representatives of the religious community. Pastors become 'celebrity Gods');
- 4. Instructional programs - quickly available, relevant information. News and comments on the news from a Christian perspective;
- 5. Evangelism - use only with local church preparation and follow-up (tendency of least stable of radio listeners to be the most responsive!).²³

The purposes are a more refined set of the goals proposed earlier and are equally evangelistic in style and intent. They are, however, much more sophisticated in their knowledge and respect for the power and potential of the media. Much of religious broadcasting of the 60's and early 70's appears to have taken note of Bachman's work.

The most important contribution that Bachman makes is suggesting a fundamental criterion by which broadcasting may be evaluated in the light of the Christian interpretation of life and of man. "The fundamental criterion....is the question of whether or not the listener-viewer is treated as man or less-than man."²⁴ Does broadcasting affirm the wholeness and the incompleteness of man as man apart from God and other men? Does the expression and creation of the medium accurately and faithfully portray man as

²³Ibid., pp. 124-141.

²⁴Ibid., p. 55.

a thinking, decision-making person. This guideline for evaluation is particularly directed at advertising which is a product not of man's need and potential, but of motivational research manipulation of information. In programming, this same criterion aims at portrayal of man as a super-human or a super-phoney. Does the image of man created reveal humanity, sensitivity, and vulnerability, or does it project superficial and vain portraits of the human condition?

In short, in addition to the church's use of media, the church must consider and judge the values and images generated by the broadcast media. Even as church groups tried to influence or coerce Hollywood into making "Christian" films, we cannot now produce Christian broadcasting by whatever pressure we might bear on the media. We can, however, act as interpreter and conscience for media in the safeguarding of the creation and manipulation of human images in sound and picture. In part, this means that we must be concerned for the portrayal of people and situation which would not normally become subject matter for radio and television. An opposite point of view, an unpopular individual or group, an unknown organization, and an unwanted reality are all subjects for which the church may intervene and guarantee a hearing by the media. The alternative is a homogenized portrayal of man and society which is devoid of either diversity or originality, and thus

destructive of the Christian understanding of man.

THE CHURCH AND TELEVISION

The transition, or expansion, of mass media skills from radio into television occurred with much the same pace and problems as the church experienced with radio. Many of the less subtle features of the radio experience became transparent, and perhaps offensive, in a visual medium. Television gave faces and bodies to voices and sometimes the clash between a projected voice and character and the real thing was sufficient to bring about the demise of radio personalities. For others, the transition was reasonably successful. A whole new technology of behaviour had to be acquired by television personalities. Surprisingly, the visual dimension did not significantly change, or challenge, the church's perception of its media ministries. A "church service" just became more accessible to the home viewer. The preacher became more personable and there was an identification with him very similar to what many churchgoers feel for their local "in-the-flesh" pastor on Sunday mornings. However, on television, he could be turned off or turned down! It is important to note that television production units took great pains to re-produce a church setting in their studios. Back-screen projections simulated stain-glass windows and studio props included a pulpit, altar, and often an entire chancel area--including the

choir. Introductory tape segments often used film footage of a busy street, external views of a church, and finally the open front doors leading to the sanctuary. Cut to choir.....!

Another feature of religious television experience appeared as television studios developed mobile equipment. Christmas and Easter were the special fare of the mobile units and bigger churches doubtless competed for available television time and the right to put a mobile truck on the nursery school playground and a microwave platform and antenna next to their steeple! In many cities the honor was rotated from holiday to holiday and from church to church. But again, the observation to be made is that television was from the beginning used to re-create or duplicate the setting found in a local church. The church and the media imposed the church's traditional forms on television and neither side was inclined to overcome it. It was a source of amusement to see back-projection slides photographed at the local Methodist Church used as a backdrop for the Baptists, Catholics, and a guest evangelist from the Church of God!

The unique possibilities of television did begin to emerge, however, and nowhere were they more immediately apparent than the TV specials of Billy Graham rallies. The non-religious parallel is the Sunday afternoon football game. Perhaps ominously, the Graham rally was usually in a

football stadium--goalposts and all! Where television's "isolated" camera picked up the football cornerback, it now picked up George Beverly Shea or the former Miss World. The signal-calling action of the quarterback was a training experience for the camerawork on Graham at the pulpit. To go to extreme lengths, the wide-angle shot of both teams became the field shot of the platform erected on the 50-yard line with Billy Graham, the special guests, the piano and George Shea, and the massed choirs. The spectators of the football game were almost indistinguishable from the audience at the crusade rally. All the Graham rallies lacked was the overhead shot from the Goodyear blimp. Apparently, ABC Sports had the contract sewed up!

A second area of programming which at least pointed the way towards a visual style of communications was the television equivalent of the radio talk-show. Again, voices became people and people were interesting to look at, to watch, and to study. Relationships between people in discussion, sometimes heated, were exciting to watch. Individual speakers and panel participants could have their input supplemented by graphics, slides, pictures, and films. The studio set, and later in-the-field taping strengthened the reality and intensity of the presentation. This also changed the responsibility of the announcer, the narrator, and the host. These people had the responsibility of creating whatever mood, background, or information base

upon which a radio interview or discussion would proceed. The television audience could see for themselves the setting, the people, and any graphic or illustrative material that would help inform the discussion. This meant that the host's role became more important to the program. With the visual materials describing the background and tone of the discussion, the host had to concentrate on his guest and explore and reveal him with sensitive questions and listening. Of course, these skills were needed for good radio, but they could be sloughed-off with descriptions of the guests, their illustrations, etc. Additionally, the informal, even careless relationship of the radio studio passed on to the TV set where physical settings and behaviour were instantly communicated to the audience. This produced new men with different styles and behaviours that would be "acceptable" to the viewing audience. Of course, a visual medium had its liabilities too, and many interviews and discussions were never heard because people were "looking" and not listening.

A third area of programming to which the church has paid particular attention is the dramatic show. Television provided increased economic incentive for writers, actors, and producers to develop serials and anthologies for specialized interest groups. The National Council of Churches, in cooperation with network production groups, developed such series as 'Look Up and Live' and 'Lamp Unto my Feet',

both CBS, both still being broadcast. Like most network shows, these programs were syndicated to affiliate stations most of whom choose to use them to fulfill religious--community--public service time obligations without a painful local effort at church programming.

'Look Up and Live' was, and is, a distinctive collection of scripts written and produced for the television audience. The stated goal of these plays is "...to use secular techniques to teach religious truths....and...to focus the role and interaction of the players on the common aspects of man's shared dilemma." To such questions as "What is Faith?" and "How are competing claims of spiritual men to be resolved?", there is no ultimate answer given. The series seeks only to stir the imagination and invite exploration by the viewer--presumably through the agency of his local church. The editor of a collection of these plays, John Gunn, takes pains to point out that dramatic presentations for television and the stage perform the same function as did the parables of the New Testament. Furthermore, "...this dramatic tradition has been sustained by the church in its sacraments, its medieval morality plays, and in past and current passion plays."²⁵ Religious broadcasting is viewed as an accessory to, but not a replacement for, the active ministries of the church.

²⁵John Gunn, The Seeking Years: Plays from 'Look Up and Live' (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1959), pp. 9-10.

A distinctive feature of the 'Look Up and Live' series is its reliance upon a visible and active narrator to (1) guide the movement and interaction of the play's characters, and (2) to guide and direct the insight and understanding of the viewing audience. The narrator's role is very similar to the narrator in 'Our Town' or the character/narrator in 'Tom Jones'. He moves in and out of relationship to the actors and to the viewer, serving as a facilitator and mediator of the play's meaning and direction. The theologically-oriented viewer may wonder about symbolic values present in the narrator's role, but a fair understanding is to view this figure as an invention of modern theater techniques.

A similar series is the 'Insight' program produced at network facilities in Los Angeles by the Paulist order. It is jointly sponsored by the local Catholic diocese and the Southern California Council of Churches. 'Insight' has been particularly successful at producing dramatic scripts on the same professional level as network production crews. In addition, professional, well-known actors are a regular part of the series. Top talent is also available in the writing, directing, and technical skills as well. Scripts tend to be somewhat generalized, pointing at recognizable human problems and short-comings. Interpretative work is minimal.

Simultaneously with the networks' production of series with the NCC, literally dozens of evangelical groups were forming independent productions groups producing filmed, and later taped, programs for use first in a local channel, and later for distribution in the many informal and formal sharing networks that developed both in the broadcast industry and among the evangelical churches. Among the most prolific production units were two evangelical groups based in Texas, and amply supplied with Texas oil money. Victory Communications of Beaumont, Texas produced the series entitled 'Voice of Victory' which was little more than a filmed church service featuring the preaching of several revival preachers. The Victory organization specialized in television revivals, and would contract with a local station to produce, or broadcast, previously taped material, daily for a week or more while services of healing and worship were held in churches in the community. Their mainstay program 'Voice' is currently syndicated by over 187 stations throughout the United States.

A second evangelical production group is the Challenge Ministries of L. B. Kramer from Dallas, Texas. The 'Challenge' group is closely affiliated with organizations around the country such as 'Challenge for Youth' and 'Teen Challenge' of Southern California and 'Challenge for Change' throughout the Southwest. The television series is also syndicated and sold on a piecemeal basis to local churches

which arrange for local viewing time and to stations wishing to satisfy public service time and meet some expressed preferences in their local community. The format of 'Challenge' programs consists largely of interviews with professionals in the arts and entertainment fields, soliciting from them informal testimony about their life and the work of the Spirit. A host, often Rev. Kramer, handles the informal interview and follows up the conversation with a brief homiletic and inspirational summary.

Equally evangelical, but much more independent and personality-centered are several production units which have the backing of large multi-faceted foundations. A prime example is the 'Kathryn Kuhlman' Foundation which sponsors, and produces, a 30-minute meditational-inspiration program more-or-less centering around the personal vision and character of Kathryn Kuhlman. Ms Kuhlman's accent and manner betrays a Texas background of fundamental faith-healing spiritualism. Her guests are those people who are testimonies to the work of the Spirit in their own lives and whose interview responses consist of multiple tales of healing, acts of faith, and vague predictions of what the Spirit is doing and will do in the lives of men everywhere. I do not wish to make light of Ms Kuhlman or her efforts in religious programming. I must confess that the evangelical, fundamental religious experience is foreign to me and its presence on a modern communications medium

seems somehow contradictory and out-of-place.

The Catholic Church, although previously not listed in this chapter, must be mentioned here because of its distinct and consistent contribution to religious programming. Working through several of its clerical and lay orders, they have produced childrens' shows and serious, contemporary dramatic offerings. A fairly recent offering is 'My Friend Pookie', a puppet show produced by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart in the Los Angeles area. It is a simple straight-forward show featuring puppet-person dialogues about themes and problems central to the Christian faith. It does not proselytize, but consistent viewing will quickly reveal that Catholic classrooms have in 'Pookie' a significant learning tool for religious training. Part of the show's character is its simple, almost sloppy set and teaching materials. It often appears to be hastily put together, but it does so in such a way as to make the viewer feel at home rather than insulted.

'The Christophers' is another Catholic production sponsored locally by diocesan offices. It features interview and demonstration formats with guests from the world of the arts as well as theological personages. A narrator often guides the conversation and demonstration of art, but many times allows the guest to speak freely and upon his own course of thought. It is an interesting program and its meditational value is significant, but not offensive to

a non-churchgoer.

Two additional areas of religious television programming need to be mentioned here largely because they appear to offer the guidelines to future experiments with the video medium. The first area is that of instructional programming in religion. Dr. Edward W. Bauman of Wesley Theological Seminary has held the teaching position in several filmed series, notably 'Christ and the Meaning of Life'. The course is filmed for use in local churches and is additionally available for television usage in communities where time and audience may be obtained. The 'semester' course contains thirteen lessons and requires supplementary texts of a Bible, Bauman's The Life and Teaching of Jesus, and a study guide for the filmed or televised material. The course encourages participation by providing questions for student response and a location to send completed tests and papers for evaluation. Certification is also available. The strongest element of the series (one of four courses available) is the co-ordination of visual, illustrative material such as maps, paintings, archeological findings, and charts with lecture material provided by Dr. Bauman. The teaching style is unique to religious educational programming, but is fairly common fare among current educational practice. The rational information is dependent upon the lecturer and visual material would be non-sensical without his narration.

A second instructional resource is the adaption of television serial programs to the classroom. One such example is TRAFCO's 'Breakthru' series for children. The National Instructional Television Center has selected this series for use and availability for use in elementary education. The Center will offer the programs through its catalogs as study material for moral and value education.²⁶ Individual school districts may order the programs in various film and tape formats for use in local school and community education programs.

Rapidly emerging as the most unique and refreshing media effort by churches is the telespot, a "commercial" 30 seconds to 2 minutes in length for use on television. Now being produced by almost every denominational media agency and several independent production companies, the spots focus on human issues in life conflict and decisions and offer a broad spiritual resource in response. Other "spots" are created especially for use during specific periods of the Church year. "Teleketics", the distribution outlet for the Franciscan Film Society, has produced a wonderful series entitled 'Resurrection' for use during Lent and at Easter. The 1-minute spots provide strong visual imagery of life, death, rebirth and end with a short, quiet narration from scripture. Many of the spots use plant and

²⁶"Breakthru Series Selected for Use in Course of Study for the Classroom", news item, Continuity (August-September 1971), 6.

animal life cycles as visual materials while others focus on the ends and beginning of human life, communication, and relationship.

The Presbyterian Church (United) has produced similar telespots, these having reference to specific events and teachings in the life of Jesus. Filmed in the Holy Land, the spots are made available to networks for year-round use and to individual stations and churches for local programming.

Finally, it is necessary to set down some of the church's priorities and guidelines for dealing with television. Because so many church agencies of many denominations and faiths are involved with television, it is not feasible to set down, or even summarize, their policies here. William Bluem's book, Religious Television Programs, A Study of Relevance, seems to be the most complete resource on the subject and summarizes clear steps for developing a successful religious programming policy.

...there is a need for a broad separate range of program conceptualizations.

1. To awaken and develop a sense of the depth and mystery of life and of man's personal and corporate responsibilities in the contemporary world.
2. To present the historical foundations of the religious experience as well as the continuing presence of man's religious experience and institutions in the world today.
3. To reflect the continuing dialogue between the church and the world.²⁷

²⁷William Bluem, Religious Television Programs, A Study of Relevance (New York: Hastings House, 1969), pp. 171-174.

These priorities are a more sophisticated version of earlier joint-church statements of media policy. Readers are referred to the early part of this chapter referring to guidelines for the film awards given by the NCC. There is the concern to portray the religious heritage and subject matter with honesty and with relevance to contemporary situations. There is also the stated need to portray accurately and with sensitivity the human situation, its hope and predicament. The third priority is a new slant for religious communications and one which is singularly applicable to the television medium. It calls for programming which "reflects the continuing dialogue between the church and the world". This reflecting ability of television is one which will particularly concern us in later chapters. Using the same essential medium, but with a different technological and political base, the church and cable television demand a new set of priorities and bases for interaction and programming.

For an additional dimension of "seeing" the church's responsibilities with television, a briefly-established Institute for Television Interaction at San Anselmo suggests goals regarding the church. Essentially, these goals consist of a vision of ministry which views television in McLuanesque terminology as "environment" and "extensions of man's senses."

1. To perform feedback to the church, to educate church people about broadcasting, its effect on our culture and its implications for theology, ministry, and faith.
2. To influence traditional forms and structures of the church so that in all its activities the church can be more aware of and speak more relevantly to the new shape of society as brought about by the electronic communications.
3. To discover the meaning of the Christian Gospel for the situation of men within the structures and institutions of the television industry.
4. To discover ways of communicating the gospel in language and thought forms of men immersed in the broadcasting industry in such a way that they may understand the meaning of the Christian message in their work situation.
5. To work out and preach a theology relative to the electronic communications milieu.
6. To establish lines of communication between the churches and the television industry.²⁸

The significance of this statement is not that it reflects the church's traditional role in evangelistic endeavor to all forms of man's organizations and life, but that it does so with regard to the startling cultural and political implications of television as an electronic communications revolution. The terminology is that of television and of media research scholars. It poses the vital possibility that society as the church has known and dealt with it is now changed by a communications revolution of which we are only beginning to be aware. It is this message that church national leaders have begun to speak to the church and it is this revolution in communications to

²⁸"Institute for Television Interaction" (a printed flyer. San Anselmo, CA: 1970)

which the particular study and reflections of this document is concerned. Cable Television is the immediate technological demonstration of this revolution. It is currently an active force in many communities and will unquestionably become a critically powerful force in the next 10 to 15 years. Already major battles of control and usage are being fought over "the cable". It is appropriate then, to close this chapter with a short survey of the church's work with the cable industry to this point.

THE CHURCH AND CABLE TELEVISION

Cable TV may or may not be a familiar subject to many readers so its particulars will be covered in the following chapter. What is of concern here is that many church agencies have already taken an important and on-going relationship with the cable industry and are working to communicate information and ideas about the medium to the local church and community.

The United Church of Christ has published two important informative works designed to acquaint church and community leaders with the nature of the cable medium. A Short Course in Cable, a 14-page generously-distributed booklet has done a great deal to make city leaders and planners, and church leaders and members, aware of what the cable could mean to their communities. It is a short, concisely-worded collection of questions and answers, history,

problems, and vision statements about cable tv. A more elaborate study designed to help organize community response to cable has been published in Cable Television, a Guide to Community Action written by Monroe Price and John Wicklein. It has become a must for students and planners of the cable franchise. In addition, the UCC has established a Cable Advisory Service in its New York Office of Communications. This service is available to communities wanting professional and economically neutral assistance in writing a local cable franchise. It is an example of communications ministry in its most current and critically needed form. Much of what the following chapters propose is indebted to the UCC Service for inspiration and vision.

The Broadcast and Film Commission (BFC) of the National Council of Churches (NCC) has been involved with cable from its emergence as an experimental technology in New York City and the Eastern states. The commission has provided resource and opinion to Federal Communications Commission hearings in Washington, D. C. It has likewise provided advice and counsel to dozens of groups throughout the nation who are facing the problems of community access and control of cable communications in their cities. Perhaps the most consistent and useful service it has is its monthly publication Cable Information which provides subscribers with current status reports on franchise applications, FCC regulations, training conferences and workshops,

and new programming ideas and resources. In addition, the BFC staff has provided staff persons for workshops and seminars on cable.

Denominational Offices have their usual variety of responses to the cable phenomena. Characteristic of these is TRAFCO, the Television, Radio, and Film Commission of the United Methodist Church. The staff of TRAFCO, in addition to being an in-house communications service, is charged with the responsibility of developing teaching on significant areas of media change and development. It has provided resource persons to public and private forums on cable and sought to use its resources and its offices to provide information to the public about cable television. TRAFCO, in conjunction with schools and councils of churches around the country has provided Cable Workshops for church leaders. One such workshop was part of a general media workshop at the School of Theology in Claremont, July 1973. Resource people included Bill Richards and Wilford Bane of TRAFCO, George Conklin of the UCC Media Project in San Francisco, and Bill Fore of the BFC in New York. Students had access to porta-paks and production studio equipment for hands-on production of tapes for viewing by the workshop. Experiences of the students in on-the-street tapings and editing into final form provided ideas which could be discussed and critiqued by staff and fellow students. Many discussion opportunities gave students and resource people

time to exchange formal and informal opinions on cable programming and the role of the church within CATV. Lecture input from several persons provided specific data regarding franchising, other cable groups, and legal problems in getting cable access in communities.

In 1974, a similar workshop was conducted with Dr. Allen Moore of the STC faculty presiding. The emphasis was on hands-on experience of the porta-pak and on participants' reactions to use of the video equipment with individuals and groups outside of the school.

These illustrations are brief, but so is the length of time in which the church has been involved with the problems and possibilities of cable television. This thesis is intended to add to the growing resource of ideas and evaluations of the church and cable.

CHAPTER II

A PRIMER ON CABLE TELEVISION

Cable Television...can, to begin with, deliver the full range of mass entertainment and information services now being delivered by commercial and non-commercial stations....It can provide commercial services that open-circuit television and radio cannot: neighborhood entertainment and information associated with national or neighborhood marketing and merchandising services; marketing and merchandising services not associated with entertainment and information; data transmission; message services of various kinds including fire alarm, burglar alarm, surveillance, meter reading, and the like. It can perhaps serve enormously in providing or supporting public services; above all formal and informal instruction but also health services, welfare services, employment services, consumer education services, library services, community development services, and no doubt others that can be identified; within this general area might also be listed the services that the system might be able to provide to the political processes by its enlistment in political campaigning and the services (or disservices) it might provide by making possible instant polling of a populace. - Arthur Singer, Sloan Foundation¹

Most of the existing cable systems came in the back door with a very basic and limited plan of services. Communities looking at what is now envisioned for cable must feel something like an accident victim crawling away saying 'I don't want to get involved.'

- Mr. Milton Stern, University of California²

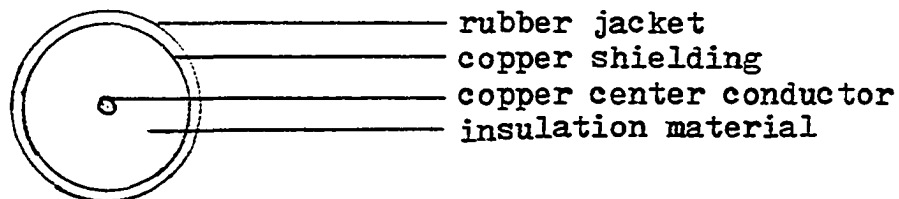
¹Arthur Singer, quoted in Martin Mayer, About Television (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 346.

²Milton Stern, Dean, University Extension, U.C. Berkeley, remarks at the opening of a workshop on cable television programming, U. C. Berkeley, May 5, 1973.

TECHNOLOGY

Considering all of the many, many difficult and confusing trials which cable television (CATV) has undergone in its short history, it is some small measure of relief that the very title 'Cable Television' is precise and gives absolute clarity to the essential elements of the technology. Quite simply stated, cable tv is the collection of television programming which is distributed by cable--as opposed to the broadcast, wireless, transmission received by most television sets. It is also the possibility of hundreds of data and relational services connecting your home with resources and people within your community.

The "cable" referred to in "cable television" is known in electronic terminology as coaxial cable and consists of a single center conductor surrounded by a heavy jacket of insulating material; an outer conductor, usually woven wire or solid copper sheet, surrounding the insulating material; and a rubber or heavy plastic sheath enclosing the total package. The sheath is waterproof and protection against mounting clamps and hooks. The complete cable looks like this:



The center conductor actually carries the television signals--different signals being transmitted on the cable at different frequencies. The outer conductor acts as a shield for unwanted signals such as ignition systems, motor current, power lines, etc. and also reduces signal loss from the center conductor. Signals placed on the center conductor at different frequencies are sent simultaneously in a frequency spectrum identified as narrowcast. Tuning circuits at the individual television sets in subscribers' homes separate the various frequencies and feed them onto the television screen. Since transmission is by cable instead of broadcast and receiving antennas, all signals are approximately equal in strength and much freer from interference and visual "noise". It is quite common for existing broadcast signals on both VHF (channels 2 - 13) and UHF (14 - 83) to be re-processed and placed sequentially 2 - 13 on the VHF dial. Additional channels then are placed usually on a channel series identified by letters. For example, in the Los Angeles area, THETA cable places CBS, channel 2 on THETA 2, local origination channel on 3, NBC, channel 4 on 4, independent 5 on 5, and channel 28 (UHF) on 6, etc.... The re-organization is done for tuning convenience. THETA also uses lettered channels to designate additional UHF channels and special services channels such as time, weather, news, food prices, etc.

The cable itself is usually strung on utility poles and "drops" are made into subscribing households. Many communities are requiring that cables be run underground, an incredible expense that, while desirable, would effectively prevent any cable company from bidding for the franchise in that community. Whether on poles or underground in conduits shared with the utility and telephone companies, cable systems have signal boosters or amplifiers placed at regular intervals to restore signals to original strength where distance and connections have weakened them. In addition, it is technically possible to place cable taps or "neighborhood head-end" at any point in the cable to give communities their own local studio or broadcast base.

The final key element in a cable system is a facility or transmission site known as a Head-End. Here all storage, playback, studio, antenna, and transmission equipment is located. A brief listing of common Head-End equipment will be useful for further discussions. Since the amount and kind of Head-End equipment is directly related to the kinds of programming a cable system is doing, it will be expedient to describe both equipment and programming in the same descriptions. A short background on each area is included.

PROGRAMMING

Existing Broadcast Signals

The use of cable to transmit and distribute television signals first came into being on the East Coast, specifically in the mountainous regions of Pennsylvania and West Virginia where towns hidden in valleys and behind mountains could not get good reception, or any reception at all, from normal television broadcasting. Enterprising persons in these communities installed a television antenna on a hilltop and ran the signal via cable back into town. Neighbors, noting that his television signal was much improved, suggested extending the cable to their houses and pretty soon the whole town wanted in on a good thing.

As more and more people hooked onto the cable, reception became weaker and weaker--due to the diminishing signal strength by the length of the cable and number of connections to it. Having found a solution to "behind the hill" reception, improvements and modifications were fast in coming. In some cases, multiple antennas were placed on the hill and cables for each run into town for attachment to a limited number of houses for each antenna. In other situations, signal boosters were placed at intervals along the cable to amplify the signal and pass it to houses further down the line. Complex distributions systems were developed to facilitate distribution both economically and

with maximum technical success.

The American commercial spirit was quick to respond to the demand for such cable systems and cable companies emerged in out-of-the-way towns across the nation. There were a few instances in which city councils sought to organize and construct a city-owned cable system. Such city systems as did emerge often ran into trouble because of financial and legal difficulties in cable ownership, but also because it seemed a dangerous thing to most communities to have the municipal government the sole agent of control over external media access. Later development of the cable technology and programming has raised the need for re-examination of municipal control and regulation, but few systems even today are owned and operated by a city agency. This problem will be discussed further both in present access regulation and in FCC legal requirements.

Cable systems were largely financed by monthly subscribers' fees, usually on the average of \$5 per month or \$60 per year. Note that this compares with an estimated \$75 per year paid in advertising costs of commercial products on broadcast television programming. In more recent cable programming developments, additional fees provided additional services. These will be discussed in a later section.

Once cable systems had become a fairly common commercial investment, businessmen and technicians, in concert, searched around for areas of expansion and investment. They found it in a rather simple question. Why not extend the cable and master antenna system to pick up signals outside of a community's normal broadcast reception area? Telephone and telegraph companies had existing cables available for lease and their facilities extended and interconnected all the way across the country. In the 50's, microwave transmission and reception became a common means of shipping a television program across country. Microwave was particularly important because it was clean, fast, and economical.

Head-End equipment for reception and re-transmission over cable of existing broadcast systems is rather simple. A master antenna and/or microwave link for signal reception; a receiving instrument not unlike a normal television set, but much more accurate; a processing system for strengthening a weak signal, measuring it for strength and consistency, and monitoring in and out video and audio signals; a transmitter to put the signal on a cable; and the necessary distribution system consisting of cable, poles or underground conduit, signal amplifiers, "drops" or local attachment connection devices. Depending upon the number and kind of signals collected and distributed by cable, conversion or re-processing equipment may be included to place

all signals on existing VHF channels or to extend the system to the UHF bandwidth. This basic technological hardware could be extended in order to manipulate broadcast times of various programs. Specifically, videotape recorders could be used to "can" incoming signals and re-broadcast them at a later, more convenient time. The "canning" of broadcast signals represented additional legal problems for cable companies and this will be explored later in a section on regulation and laws.

One further point should be mentioned in a description of basic cable operations. Problems were rampant in most cable systems. Picture quality was often poor and always irregular. Antennas were poorly placed and cable connections often interfered with the operation of a television set. One failure of the cable system at any point could cause problems throughout the system. Repair, installation, and service functions of cable companies were slow and unreliable. Most of these problems were due to the quick and dirty organizational and financial structures which developed to make money off cable television. Since some reception was better than none for most communities originally wired for cable, patience with poor performance was mandatory for subscribers. In fact, the cable franchising practices of many companies were clearly aimed at making a fast buck. Franchises for a cable operation were granted to the first companies to apply in many cases.

Several companies made a practice of acquiring franchises in communities with little or no guarantees or requirements for service. Such companies often held the franchises, stalling city demands for service, and then sold the franchises to other companies at enormously inflated prices. This is still a current practice in many communities, but a more elaborate discussion of this will take place later.

Local Origination Programming

Cable companies soon began bidding for franchises in urban and suburban communities as well. Even though reception was often fair to good in these areas, many people took advantage of a cable system which provided all existing signals with visual clarity and free from interference. Additional channels, beyond normal broadcast reception range, were also inviting to urban area subscribers. San Diego, for instance, has the nation's largest cable system which imports signals from Los Angeles in addition to those normally available in San Diego. As one might expect, such "outside" channels were causes of great legal maneuvers, financial dealings, and growth and development within the industry. In particular, broadcasting stations contended that cable companies had obligations to pay royalties and fees on programs which they received and re-distributed to their subscribers. The Federal Communications

Commission in Washington found itself the unwilling arbitrator of a long and continuing series of complex decisions regarding rights of both broadcasters and cable operators. This history of FCC regulation is better presented in a separate section of this paper.

One of the areas in which FCC regulation soon appeared was that of local origination. For many cable companies, improvement of existing broadcast signals by cable transmission was not sufficient attraction to increase the number of subscribers. Some further offering by cable companies was necessary. Local Origination is the term given to programming which is initiated by local cable companies as an additional service to the handling of existing broadcast signals. The rather limited amount of equipment required for basic reception and re-transmission of signals was supplemented by a small television studio with cameras, a filmchain to play films and slides over cable, and a variety of equipment to provide certain data and informational services.

Local origination was, and is, often a game of getting something for nothing. Since cable operators were simply looking for some offerings which would increase interest and attract new subscribers, they were not particular about such offerings other than that the costs be minimal. The first range of local origination offerings appeared as "information--data channels". A camera at the

cable distribution center was focused on the face of a large clock and--Lo and Behold--the cable system had a time channel--24 hours a day; costs--about \$1.25 per day of electricity for the clock and \$10.00 per day for camera operating costs. Likewise, a camera was focused on a barometer and a thermometer set--and a weather channel appeared! A more useful service came when a camera was focused on the readout board of a teletype machine. Reuters, UPI, and other wire news services became instant 24-hour programming for cable companies. It was very cheap, but also very useful for cable subscribers. No newscaster, no writers or directors, no studio personnel required--just a camera pointed at the teletype. In use now, incidentally, is a device which electronically translates the teletype messages into video characters on the screen. The image is clearer and almost instantaneous.

It would be insensitive of this writer to fail to point out the newest of these informational services to appear on the cable. Several companies now offer daily horoscopes and related astrological data for viewers. Usually companies subscribe to this service which is furnished to cable studios either on videotape ready for broadcast, over and over, or in roll chart form which is endlessly repeated in front of a continuously operating camera. Such use of channel space indicates the incredible capability of cable television to provide programming for

very specialized audiences! This is not a comment on astrology and people who watch such programming; rather, it indicates that cable television is not limited to programming which depends on large audiences or maximum popularity. Once a cable company is operating, additional informational channels represent an absolute minimal cost for the local operator.

Recent development of another set of informational channels bears mention here. Rising costs and the energy crisis have given impetus to the operation of consumer "price-watch" channels. On THETA CABLE in Santa Monica, and Ontario, California, subscribers can tune in Channel F for current gasoline prices at stations in the area.³ Consumer groups, or company personnel, regularly "shop" gas stations in the communities to determine current prices. This information is printed on either display cards for in-front camera viewing, or it is electronically printed into the television system by a character keyboard which either holds the information until it is up-dated, or rotates the display to additional programming.

Food prices are offered in the Santa Monica area. The prices of basic food staples are supplied by consumer shoppers who do an exhaustive "shop" of several markets obtaining comparative prices. The display, which is elec-

³Program Guide, a monthly publication of THETA CABLE, Santa Monica, CA. 1974.

tronic, lists such items as "orange juice, Birds Eye, 8 oz can, frozen" and then details the prices for that item at each of some eight major stores in the Santa Monica area. The display for any one item lasts one minute and then switches to a new commodity. Someone who has time to watch the entire 30 to 40 minute cycle of prices could locate exact prices at particular stores, but patience would be required!.

The filmchain offered cable companies the next major and cheap resource of programming for local origination. Old movies became a regular feature of cable programming, with many companies buying or leasing, sight-unseen, thousands of films which were considered out-of-date and non-marketable by film distribution and film-making companies. These films were not collectors items, nor were they of interest to film students. They were simply poor films for the most part! But they were cheap and an incredible number of them have appeared over and over on cable channels. Some companies run a channel exclusively for movies and repeat the offerings three and four times a week. Cable can afford to do this.

Many public-service and non-profit organizations offered films at little or no charge to cable companies. The local electric company, the telephone company, government agencies, and the Armed Forces all had public relations films available for showing. So many viewers

received a broadside of American corporate public relations efforts. Interesting, but some question remains about how much of these films are "in the public interest".

Slides were also part of filmchain programming and many, many hours of travelogues have been offered by slide and taped narrations. Sometimes music and landscape slides were offered for hours at a time, and some viewers undoubtedly felt strangely like a citizen in George Orwell's '1984' with mood music and pleasant images being offered on the tube to calm and relax him!

Studio programs were the most expensive, and therefore, most infrequent of Local Origination programming. Among the critical problems facing cable operators is that studio broadcasts by cable companies will be compared with the work of broadcast channels. The cable company must struggle hard to present a studio image which even remotely compares with the polish and costs of major channels. As an alternative, cable operators have sought to develop a "style" of operation which is relatively simple, clean, and unique to the cable industry. The interview format is most common with emphasis being given to a few standard camera angles and a pleasant, quiet setting for participants. Program content becomes very important and local community figures provide much of the drawing power for local cable programming. Such studio shows are almost invariably taped and re-broadcast two or even three times

a week.

Local news shows are also among the regular diet of cable origination programming. Community events can be presented in a close, personal style--often by people directly involved in the particular event.

More expensive and more elaborate programming includes the remote telecasts of city council meetings and high school football games. These events, however, can draw larger audiences than studio-based operations. For many cable companies, such telecasts are good public relations--a demonstration of the good and sincere efforts and interest of the cable operator in the local community. Such broadcasts are usually done "live" by remote television vans which are driven to the football field or city hall. The signal is either relayed by microwave units back to the studio and from there onto the cable, or, in more permanent installations, television crews connect directly into the cable from the broadcast site. Such a connection is comparatively inexpensive and all necessary electronic gear can be carried in the remote vans and plugged in at the site.

While examination of such programming will be made later in this paper, it is worthwhile to note at this point that the presence of cameras--and, by extension, the entire community--usually inhibits some of the proceedings at "public" meetings. City fathers and public employees

may work for the people, but they are usually not in the position of being seen and heard by them. More than one city council has canceled cable broadcasts with the comment that the camera's presence inhibited their normal give-and-take of council business. "Language requirements" were most often listed as reasons for the wish to terminate cable-casting of public meetings!

Remote vehicles have also been used to cover a wide variety of events ranging from rodeo parades to school science fairs, and cultural festivals. The role of cable in presenting the minority activity of a community is one which will be dealt with in a later section.

Public Access Programming

The most contested area of FCC regulation and of local community control is that of the "public's right" of open access to cable channels within their community. The foundation of this conflict is located in the technology of cable, and as a result, in cable's finances. The broadcast mass media is an incredibly expensive and complex business. In addition to necessary studio equipment for "live" production of TV shows, broadcast television must build and maintain a large and very expensive transmitter for radio frequency; they must depend upon professional talent and resources which require major outlays of capital for privilege of use and re-use; they must have a large

development and management staff to bring shows from ideas into finished products; they must have a marketing division to sell their productions; and must have a large legal and public relations department to negotiate and defend their interests in the community and broadcast world.

Cable operators are certainly not freed from all of the above, but they are not dependent either on much of the technology for broadcasting, or on the amounts of capital needed for professional talent and programming material. Cable companies' costs are set by a limited, fixed, and defined audience--their subscribers. The core of their programming is defined and basically at minimum costs. The investment for cable installation in the community can be financed over a long period of time while a regular monthly fixed income is maintained to the company. Because of their limited size, dependent upon the number of households wired, all of the related services of management, public relations, marketing, and legal aid are reduced in scope and size compared to broadcast operations.

Because of cable's lower operating finances and a technology which allows a large number of channels to be available for use in a limited geographical area, community interests are correct in assuming that individual or group access to cable channel time should be easier and less expensive than that of broadcast television time. The cable system is more integrated into, and identified with, the

local community. It therefore, assumes higher expectations and obligations within that community, or at least so argue the people.

Not so, argues the cable company. While overall budgets may be comparatively lower for cable than broadcast television, cable operators are not raking in piles of money and hoarding it. Wiring a community is expensive and so is the creation of more useful and local programming. To open up cable's "wealth of channels" to citizens, individually and in groups, would be to raise the operating costs of the company and very probably tip the operating budget towards disaster.

After a long period of turning the other way, and an equally long period of siding with broadcast television, the Federal Communications Commission finally issued regulations requiring that cable operators maintain at least one channel for public access, in addition to one channel for municipal use and one channel for educational use in any community which the company serves.⁴ This is a mandatory element of any franchise for a cable operator. There are some limitations about finances and time regarding its use, but the basic principle of public "accessibility" has been established and "defended" by the FCC.

⁴Federal Communications Commission, Rules and Regulations, Part 76, "Cable Television Service", March 1972, subpart G, section 76.201-76.251.

The result of "public access" availability is that few members of the public have availed themselves of cable channels. Public access, simply stated, is that any person can bring his or her videotape into the cable studio and have it played over the P.A. channel. In addition, there are some requirements that cable operators must provide a limited amount of equipment and studio/staff time for public preparations for P.A. programming.

In communities where cable has been established the longest, in urban areas where talent and interest are high, and in areas where special interests groups exist, the P.A. channel has seen some interesting experiments. For example, Sterling-Teleprompter, channel in New York City leads the nation in hours of P.A. programs. The "video freaks" and street video got their start here with such tapes as Alternative News, The Brownsville Schools Controversy, a documentary entitled 'King Heroin', and many more on-the-street taped interviews and documentaries. The video freaks are a rare and creative group of artists, students, drop-outs, educators, and others who have taken a serious interest and concern with the use of television in American society. They were among the first to realize that cable television was a means by which alternative ideas, views, and lives could be communicated to people watching the tube. They also understood the power of the video medium in organizing and educating a community

as to its problems and possibilities. In Ontario, California, two local colleges use public access time to present weekly programs on educational areas of public interest. The experience provides training for student communications majors and is a programming source for cable and the community.

Public Access channels in many cities have regular videotapes provided by a Christian Science Foundation. The tapes are sophisticated presentations of Christian Science philosophy providing more of an educational function than an evangelical or worship one.

Some college-related organizations provide videotapes as art forms for cable broadcast. College classes also prepare videotapes as class projects in television, social research, community studies, and many other areas. Such tapes are often volunteered by students and teachers or are solicited by the cable system as a demonstration of their commitment to public access programming. In other local communities, the inter-church agency--often a Council of Churches, maintains a weekly "religious news" service on a local cable channel.

Unfortunately, public access programming has not lived up to the predictions of its supporters. The prophecy that communities would analyze and solve problems via the cable has not even been heard of by the overwhelming

majority of community agencies and organizations. Additionally, financially-pressed cable operators often look at public access time and expenses as the beginning place for financial savings, even though such a cut in programming may be against FCC regulation. Public access is the particular concern of this paper and will be examined in length in future pages.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

An incredible number of good ideas and important technological changes have never gone beyond the design shops because of highly prejudicial, confused, uninformed, and inadequate legislation. Other possible innovations and contributions to modern living have been fatally crippled during the design stage and allowed to wander loose across the landscape and lawbooks in search of refuge or repair. Cable Television is still alive, and pretty much intact, but legal and economic powers are threatening to sweep cable into various status-quo camps of the communications industry.

Federal Regulations

The legal executor of the communications revolution heritage available to cable television is the Federal Communications Commission in Washington. Even their participation has been slow and often unwilling. Once they

entered the fight, their accomplices in the attempted rape of cable have been the over-the-air broadcasters, the telephone and telegraph companies, communications equipment manufacturers, and the motion picture industry. And this is only on the national level!!!!!!

The federal legal history will be summarized in the following pages. The Federal Communication Commission is a seven-member agency whose members are appointed by the president. They have the responsibility of establishing national communications goals and directives, administering regulations, licensing procedures, adjudicating any disputes, reviewing and re-issuing of licenses for television, radio, telephone, telegraph, newspapers, periodicals (?) microwave, satellite communications, and all other public and private communications airwaves, distribution systems, equipment standards, and misc.! To state the obvious--they are overworked, understaffed, under-budgeted, under-organized, and under the influence and "guidance" of the very media they are supposed to be regulating! Governmental process in America is distinct in that regulatory and information-dependent agencies are almost always understaffed and under-budgeted. Therefore, these agencies depend upon outside "voluntary, industry experts" to research and propose both direction and regulation!

Central to this exploration is the FCC's responsibility for regulation and assignment of the airwaves.

Since the late 1920's, the Federal Government has undertaken the responsibility to accept application, assign frequencies, and issue licenses to radio, radio amateurs, and, in the 1940's, television. Up through the 1950's, VHF (Very High Frequency) bands were assigned to commercial users. Due to inherent properties of the VHF band and of television broadcasting equipment, VHF channels are assigned wherever possible with one channel space between each station. Such spacing prevents interference within channels and allows broadcasters to transmit the strongest possible signals for clearest reception. The largest cities have a maximum of seven stations (two adjacent at regulated bandwidth and power). On either side of and in between channels of this bandwidth, are located various frequency ranges for radio amateurs, citizens' band radio, police and fire, civil defense, military communications, microwave, and all other assigned frequencies. Hence, the role of the FCC has for years been involved in "territorial disputes" between television broadcasters and other radiowave users for control and access to additional bands for operation. In 1960, the Commission opened up the heretofore unused UHF (Ultra High Frequency) bandwidth for commercial licensing. It was hoped by the FCC (publicly) and by public interest groups that new stations seeking UHF license would define their programming more in the areas of public interest and educational programming. This was

optimistic at best--television sets currently for sale in the United States were not equipped to receive UHF signals! Consider if you will, existing forces within the television industry--one example should suffice. NBC, the major network broadcaster and producer on the VHF bandwidth, is owned and controlled by its parent corporation, RCA. RCA makes television sets--equipped with VHF tuning only!

However, VHF broadcasters were generally supportive of the opening of the UHF bandwidth, and with reason. UHF signals are usually poorer in quality than VHF; UHF equipment is more complex, sensitive, and more expensive than VHF; and within the VHF industry, it was assumed that the possibility of licensing and programming UHF channels 14 to 83 would occupy the FCC and public interest groups for years, keeping them off the back of VHF stations. So, in 1962, Congress, at FCC urging, passed legislation requiring all new television sets to be equipped with UHF tuners. They did not establish any price control on this addition, and manufacturers such as RCA thereby justified a substantial raise in prices!

Conflicts between Congress, FCC, Broadcasters, and public interest agencies were the order of the day in the 1960's. An illustration of such conflicts would be useful to demonstrate the role FCC regulation would play in the development of cable. In a unique, and brave, action in 1968, the Commission denied renewal to WHDH-TV owned by the

Boston Herald-Traveler. The principle reason for denial was "...undue concentration of media by a single corporate owner."⁵ The Senate Commerce Comm. Subcomm. on Communications, chaired by John Pastore, R.I. recommended immediate legislation to "...prohibit the FCC from holding hearings when a station whose license was up for renewal was faced with a challenge. The FCC, could under the proposed law, consider a new application only after it had cancelled a license. This would effectively prevent the FCC from comparing an existing station's record with proposals submitted by competitors for that channel."⁶ The FCC ruled prior to the bill's committee work that license challenges would not be considered against stations that "substantially met the programming needs of the community". Challenges to renewals of such stations would be dismissed without consideration. The broadcasters' victory was very short as several consumer groups, notably a Ralph Nader group and the minority television legal aid group, Black Efforts for Soul in Television. In 1971, three years after the original action, the FCC was required to reverse its ruling declaring that it violated FCC rules.⁷ No mention

⁵Federal Communications Commission, Reports (Washington: Superintendent of Documents) August 1968.

⁶Senate Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Communications, Report, John Pastore, chr., November 1968 (Washington: Superintendent of Documents)

⁷Federal Communications Commission, Reports, February 1971.

was made of First Amendment issues. Later that year, White House policy-makers proposed legislation that would again restrict new applicants while re-licensing was underway. Such proposals are still alive and well.

Cable television, by the late 1950's, was becoming a significant industry both in economic revenue and in number of subscribers. The broadcasters sought legislation restricting the growth and development of cable. Telephone and telegraph companies joined suit and sought to establish a price level for microwave and line leases that would effectively contain cable television to small, remote, isolated towns. In 1959, the FCC, recognizing a potential hot potato, rejected a claim for regulation of cable claiming it did not have jurisdiction. Under threat of potential legislation--remember Senator Pastore?--the FCC changed its mind, deciding that at least it had jurisdiction over cable systems using microwave relays. In 1965, the Commission issued its first 'Report and Order', asserting control over cable systems using microwave links.⁸ In 1966, a 'Second Report and Order' extended 1965 regulations plus some new ones to all of the cable operators.⁹ In 1968 and 1970, the Commission issued what is called 'Notices of Inquiry and Proposed Rulemaking', submitting a rather lengthy and

⁸Federal Communications Commission, Report and Order, 1965 (Washington: Superintendent of Documents)

⁹Ibid., 1966.

complex set of proposed rules and guidelines to Congress, the Broadcasters, the Cable Industry, and--barely--the public, for evaluation and comment.¹⁰ In February of 1972, the FCC issued new cable rules covering some 500 pages of complex, confusing, compromised, and negotiated regulations.¹¹

Such specifics as are needed to continue discussion of the church's role with cable will be introduced and clarified in the chapters and sections where they are needed. The rules covering public access will be summarized in a later section of this chapter as they are the key subject matter of this paper.

Municipal Regulations and Franchising

The center pin of community access and all other forms of cable television programming is the municipal cable franchise. This is essentially a contract between the city and the cable operator prescribing, in detail, the kind and amount of service to be rendered, the rates to be charged, construction schedule guarantees, and liabilities to be incurred by both parties. A granted franchise is almost an irrevocable license to the cable operator. Unless a franchise is specifically written, tailor-

¹⁰Federal Communications Commission, Notice of Inquiry and Proposed Rule-Making, 1968 and 1970 (Washington: Superintendent of Documents)

¹¹Federal Communications Commission, Rules and Regulations

made to the community, it is very difficult to prove negligence, failure to perform, or such other grounds in order to revoke a franchise.

Briefly, the franchising process has two major components. First, a city council must prepare and adopt a legal statement titled an 'Enabling Ordinance'. This ordinance spells out what the city wants a cable system to be for its community. It specifies the process by which a franchise will be granted, sets minimum technical standards, defines the areas to be wired and the time limits for completion, and serves as a public notice that the city is in the market for a cable system. Although this is only a preliminary process, it is one that many cities do not have immediate resources and personnel to prepare. Cable television, its technology and community uses, is too recent a development for most cities to have clear ideas and knowledge about what is and is not possible. Much like the FCC's process of rule-making, many cities and small towns rely on prospective cable operators and equipment manufacturers to assist them in drafting a preliminary ordinance. As one writer has described it, "...here we have the fox and the watchdog comparing notes and discovering that they have parallel interests in the chickens."¹² This critical function of research and consultation to local communities considering a cable franchise is one area

¹²Ralph Smith, The Wired Nation (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 25.

in which the church and its supporting agencies can be of enormous help. While this will be discussed in great detail in chapter IV, a few guidelines for the church will be suggested here.

1. Local churches can enlist the national offices and staff of their denomination and National Council of Churches in suggestions and criteria-setting for the franchise.
2. Local churches can enlist their own membership in an examination of the community and a cataloging of possible uses for the cable.
3. Churches should ask members with special skills and knowledge to contribute ideas as to financing, construction, design, and operation of a cable system.
4. The churches can serve as an organizer of community opinion and response concerning the cable and programming.
5. The Church should bring its own unique traditions of justice and love into focus as criteria for assuring that the cable will be used for the community's growth and health rather than individuals' profits.
6. Church facilities should be re-examined and viewed as possible sites for community groups to use as studios, offices, study centers, and for other uses that may come about as a result of an active community response to and participation in cable.

All of these suggestions and more should mark church activity in promoting community involvement with the writing of an enabling ordinance. One word of caution--care should be taken that church interests do not become as fixed and intimidating as those of cable operators or equipment suppliers.

The second component of the franchising process is the actual granting of a cable franchise to a specific cable operator. Quite often, cities have asked potential cable operators to submit bids for both fees and service based on the guidelines established by the enabling ordinance. Companies submitting bids should be considered not solely on their matching of stated city needs, but also on their own specifications and counter-proposals. Since this part of the franchising process is going to set the framework and goals of the cable system for years to come, and because most franchises are issued for at least ten years and often up to twenty, time and detailed attention are critical elements of the community's preparation and decision.

Again, since actual franchise outlines are detailed and in complex legal and technical language, a full description will not be attempted here. A basic list of provisions have been entered in Appendix I.

The local church and its members can play a key role in the issuing of a franchise. Many of the same tasks necessary for the enabling ordinance should continue and several new functions can now be added.

1. The Church, all the churches in the community working together, can help organize within the community an independent citizens' committee to prepare an independent set of standards and specifications for a cable franchise.

2. The Church can help mediate the presentation and discussion of this and other proposals before the entire community and the city council and agencies.
3. The Church can help assure that the council's decisions are made without influence from cable operators or suppliers. The history of cable franchises is also the history of bribery of council members by potential cable owners.
4. The structuring of a permanent community agency to assist programming and public use of the cable can be assisted by the Church's support.
5. The establishment of a legal watchdog agency for the cable system should be a concern of the church. Too often, such an agency is concerned almost exclusively with finances and construction. Also important is that ALL sections of the city are wired according to schedule, that quality is good, and that public access is indeed a continuing reality.
6. Education and Governmental channels are provided by FCC rules and attention should be given to the possible programming of these channels as they affect community interests and needs.

This list is merely a temporary set of guidelines by which readers may continue exploration of the cable in this chapter. Chapters IV and V are devoted to these and related issues exclusively.

THREE SHORT CASE HISTORIES

THETA Cable is the franchise recipient of Ontario, Montclair, and Upland. Having previously constructed a large system in Santa Monica, the San Bernardino cities had the advantage of experience, a strong base of capital and personnel, and savings in programming and equipment-sharing.

THETA is owned 51% by Teleprompter (a national systems owner) and 49% by Hughes (a communications subsidiary of Howard Hughes' International). The Ontario franchise provides for:

- within present territorial limits of city for 15 years
- connections to all present and future public buildings
- connection with conversion equipment to each existent and future public and private, non-profit school building within two districts
- one channel with privacy feature for Ontario municipal government
- a minimum of four local educational channels with privacy features on two and provision for 10% of all future channels
- professional and technical assistance to school personnel for educational and public service programming
- completion of construction to all residents within two years
- all standard bonding and work guarantees regarding installation and use of city property

Ontario, Montclair, and Upland are three fairly small cities without natural political or geographical communications between them. Their residents tend to have similar economic bases in area manufacturing companies, and likewise, they have common problems regarding public transit, unemployment, pollution, and development potential. The "electronic belts" that cable will provide to each of these cities, individually and as a geographic area group,

may help them to organize themselves around common issues. Upland on the north side is the only town in which television signals have interference in reception. The local high schools provide a source of sports entertainment and have become a staple in the cable tv diet of the communities. The system is well-designed and constructed and all equipment is of current design and quality materials.

Pomona, a larger city than the first three, has granted a non-exclusive franchise to the Nationwide Cablevision, with headquarters in Glendora. Nationwide has a number of small franchises around the country but very few operating cable systems. It is common industry labeling that places Nationwide in the company of those who traffic in franchises--basically holding on to them and selling at higher profit. Some of the provisions are listed below. The Pomona franchise has been revised three times at the petition of Nationwide and each time the city has either extended time limits or waived system requirements.

- first ordinance specific undergrounding of cables; this was eliminated in a later revision
- an underground City Fire Alarm system, Water Department telemetering, and communications district system were to be installed in areas where city facilities currently existed, at no cost to city. No part of such alarm or monitoring system has been installed
- a third amendment extended the original time limit to 520 days AFTER construction was STARTED
- the franchise was granted for 20 years

- monthly fees are set at \$5.00 per house single connect
- schools are connected
- city buildings are connected
- territorial limits of system established

Nationwide Cablevision has wired only two small sections of the Pomona area. Both of these neighborhoods are isolated from over-the-air television signals by hills and cable serves to give them a better picture than they would otherwise receive. There is no studio facility in Pomona, no additional wiring has been done or appears to be planned, none of the metering system specified for city use has been installed, and no schools or public buildings have been wired to the cable system. The amendments attest to the legal maneuvering of the Cable Company, but even more, they indicate the failure of the city council to make serious plans and decisions regarding cable and to follow through on those plans. Of the many people I spoke to in Pomona, almost all of those knowledgeable of the franchise process felt that Nationwide had influenced city council members with dinners, gifts, and other demonstrations of interest outside of technical, economic, and ethical considerations. For practical purposes, no cable system exists in Pomona other than two small networks which receive broadcast signals and pass them on to a total of 156 houses.

In Claremont, city officials have twice refused to open any negotiations on a cable franchise. THETA Cable Co. of Ontario once discussed the city's future in communications, but made no proposal and received no encouragement. Nationwide Cable of Pomona also sent a salesperson to inquire and test out the area. He has never returned. And in 1971, the School of Theology administrative leadership and a legal advisor discussed the possibility of the school's acquisition of a franchise for Claremont.¹³ Public record states that the sketchy proposal was unique and merited discussion, but conversation has long-since ceased on both sides. The local newspaper reports that financial backing fell through at the School of Theology.¹⁴

In September 1974, the city council of Claremont responded to a staff inquiry concerning cable franchising by authorizing the establishment of a community commission for research and study of a cable system in Claremont.¹⁵ Representation is to be solicited from citizens, school district, the colleges, city staff, and special resource persons within the colleges and community. A staff member for the city council stated that "...we saw what was happening in other cities in the area and decided to put

¹³ Conversation between Jim Linenberger (Claremont administrative assistant) and this writer, Claremont City Offices, Claremont, CA, Summer 1972.

¹⁴ "Back Page", Claremont Courier (December 12, 1973), 35.

¹⁵ Minutes of the City Council, City of Claremont.

moratorium on the idea for at least 5 years."¹⁶ Five years is now past since that statement and it appears that Claremont has begun a long community-based discussion and recommendation process for a cable franchise.

Claremont is the only one of the three histories mentioned that directly sought (and seeks) community participation and interest in the franchise discussions. Pomona issued a franchise entirely through the considerations of its city council with no citizen involvement. Ontario's decisions invited community participation but established no organizational means to facilitate it. For the city of Claremont, community task forces are old hat. It is a standard way of handling new ideas, issues, and problems. The educational institutions within Claremont pose unique possibilities and unique problems for a franchise as do the significantly high educational and income level of its residents.

ECONOMICS OF CABLE

As in most new "revolutionary developments", financial stability and profit are the key factors in determining growth and development. Cable Television is no exception. It is no co-incidence that the largest part of the franchise is devoted to statements of liability and

¹⁶Conversation with Jim Linenberger.

cost--fee statements. City legal departments are particularly concerned that cable companies guarantee safe and proper installation with no disruption of city or service functions. Thus, large financial commitments are required, usually by posting bonds in the neighborhood of \$250,000.00 for system construction. Obviously, the amount posted depends upon the size and complexity of the system. The bonds assure the city that any damage to streets, utility poles, public buildings, or private property will be paid for by the company. Franchises specifically exempt the city from liability during construction. After a system, including studio, is built and operating, a yearly bond is posted by the cable operator to assure continued protection against repairs, damage, theft, etc. of cable installations on city property. The amount of this bond varies with each city; Ontario requires \$25,000.00 to be posted at all times, until cable operation may cease.

Bonds are not the most expensive investment a cable operator makes. Construction of cable systems is enormously expensive and dependent upon a wide variety of factors. Use of existing utility poles or underground conduits is considerably less expensive than erecting or burying a set just for cable use. Usually, cable companies obtain a lease from the telephone or power companies, often at very favorable rates. The type of housing being wired is also a crucial factor. Concentrated urban housing, with

high-rise apartment buildings is faster and less expensive to connect than individual dwellings spread out through a modern suburb. The services which the cable supplies also determine costs. More channel capability entails more head-end and booster equipment than a few channels. The number of civic and educational buildings to be wired also affect the costs.

Most important is the fact that cable operators "target" the particular area to be wired on the basis of projected number of subscribers. High and moderate income neighborhoods with stable populations are desired above low income, minority neighborhoods with transient populations. Expensive apartment housing areas are often preferred over individual dwellings. Pocket neighborhoods without clear broadcast signals are naturals for cable operators and a high percentage of subscribers may be projected as opposed to those areas which are in direct line of sight for broadcast signals. When the latter is the case, the cable companies must provide additional local origination services in order to attract subscribers.

During the franchise-award process, one of the most important specifications to be made is the area to be wired. If the cable is to do more than relay existing over-the-air signals, the entire city or community must be considered as the area to be wired. The reasons for this are extensive. A city has the obligation to provide services

and opportunities equally to all sections, all neighborhoods, and all peoples. Much city council decision-making affects one area more than another. Discrimination in statute and practice is common. Experience demonstrates that the areas of the city where cable would be most profitable (white, high income, stable) are the areas which cable owners seek to wire first, often solely. Those areas of the community which could benefit most from the services a cable system could provide are low priority for most cable owners (minority, low-income, unstable, etc.). The potential of cable to assist organization, cooperation, and development within a community is considerable, yet these are the neighborhoods which are usually left unwired (either with city council consent, or by cable operator default and fraud).

The costs of wiring a system may run as much as \$50,000.00 per mile in areas where there are multiple dwellings with space in between, extensive cable services, and undergrounding is required. Many systems run considerably less. The franchise specifies what installation fee may be charged homeowners for attachment to the cable. This has varied from \$20 to \$100 per home and the city council has the power to eliminate the fee altogether for neighborhoods where residents could not afford the fee. Often, cable operators offer free hook-up as a subscriber incentive. Franchises also call for public buildings and

schools to be connected free of charge or at actual costs. Monthly service fees are also set by the franchise and a city council may elect to encourage subscribers by a temporary reduction or elimination of the fee.

Finally, the franchise provides a percentage of cable company profits to be paid to the city. In Southern California, this fee is usually between 3% and 5%. Cable operators often negotiate with city councils for increasing or reducing this fee as a means of obtaining additional services. Some cities have committed the funds to programming, both municipal and public service channels, or to pay costs of installation in areas which would benefit most from cable service. Actual costs to the city of legal and staff work is also covered by this fee.

There are cases recorded in which cable companies paid a "bid fee" or initial payment to the city at the beginning of a franchise period, barely after the franchise has been granted! It is rumored in reliable circles that THETA Cable paid approximately \$800,000.00 for the "privilege" of wiring Santa Monica. This may not be a common practice, but it does indicate the stakes in the franchise game and the enormous profits to be made in certain communities.

Recent technological development and new program services have made additional fees a common point of contention in many cities. The advent of "pay tv" or a

"movie channel" for extra cost is one source of profitable activity which cable operators are entering. First run, uninterrupted movies (two per week) are provided by THETA on an isolated channel for a cost of \$6.00 additional per week over the normal monthly fee. A special channel decoder for the movie signals is provided for a fixed installation cost. Special data channels are being made available in certain low-number areas to provide computer access or special education programs to a limited audience. The channel use and the converter equipment both cost extra. It is these special channels that the cable companies foresee making profitable the enormous investment in wiring a community. As a result, potential wired neighborhoods become more and more specific, usually depending upon ability to pay. While this is one of the exciting virtues of cable, it must not be allowed to distract communities from the need to provide total ranges of services to all the community.

All of the financial and area stipulations of cable are of concern to the Church and community groups. The support of Church leadership and members can be crucial in determining the usefulness and versatility of a cable system. It can also be a key factor in assuring that the system service the entire community and not just a special service area that may be most profitable. If cable operators were forced to wire entire communities without regard

to their own profit-loss prospects, few operators would bid on a franchise. It is therefore imperative that local leaders participate in planning a system that will allow the cable company reasonable profit and assurance of profit, and also guarantee equal services to the entire community. Chapters IV and V deal with this area in greater detail.

THE VISIONARIES

Every major technological development since the beginning of man's industrial development has been accompanied by a visionary spirit. This spirit has usually produced the best and most hopeful ideas for development and usage of the new technology. It has, however, usually been the case that visionary ideals have taken a back place to the demands of financial success and a consumer market.

The visionary, regardless of the specific shape and goal of his vision, views CATV in terms of public access to the communications base offered by cable. To the visionary "public access" does not only refer to the public access channel designated for public use by FCC regulations. On the contrary, those of a new spirit and vision for television are planning for and asking for the "public" or open participation over all decisions in control and programming made possible by cable technology. It is largely the demonstrated vision of these people in

the metropolitan areas which has resulted in the FCC requirement for a public access channel, and has given support for a required municipal and educational channel. These three channels, by and large, are industry and governmental compromise to the experimenters and future planners within the urban environment. In essence, FCC regulation has taken a "wait and see" attitude towards the visionaries concerned with cable's development. The three required channels are granted, along with a bare minimum of the cable operator's time and money, as a testing ground for the video visionary.

Of the three "free channels" required by the FCC, the public, and the visionaries are effectively limited to the public access channel. It is not the case that educational and governmental organs are flocking to the cable operator with programming. Rather, the FCC regulations reserve the channels to the specific function to the exclusion of all others. Thus, the public and private battles over the public access channel are largely by default. The battleground for the visionary spirit is over (and "over") the public access channel.

Several groups, mostly on the East Coast and in San Francisco, have had extensive experience with public television. These groups have made use of the cable in New York City, but in areas where cable stations were not yet in operation their work and experiments have continued

nonetheless. In their own terminology they are called "street video", "guerrilla television", and "underground video". The various names chosen give the reader and viewer some indication of the nature of their experiment. Overwhelmingly, the goal and process of these groups is to provide visual experiences which are outside of the normal programming of broadcast television. They are exceptionally process-conscious and many of the groups develop and work out of a strong political framework which addresses itself to contemporary public and private media companies. They are concerned with the view of the public presented by broadcast television and with the public's own view of itself. And within that framework, they have come to understand that the new technology present in portable television cameras and recorders, the porta-pak, is a powerful tool in creating public awareness and response to its internal and external conditions and needs.

Another crucial element of the work of these visionary groups is that their process encourages the public to take full control of the video tools in order to tell their own story and communicate their own self-understandings. An excerpt from one such group's identification statement illustrates this.

Open Channel functions as a middle-man between public access channels in New York City and community groups who want to produce programming but who don't have skills or equipment. This puts Open Channel in a kind of brokerage posi-

tion....often tending to mimic professional broadcasting format and is often USED as a spokesman for public access.¹⁷

The self-statements of these groups, as indicated above, are often heavily political. The combination of this political vision and the appeal to public participation in television produces some identifications that contain challenge to the reader.

The Community Center is a media access organization working with the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton, New York. They along with other New York State groups combine pragmatic experience in and of public experimentation with television with critical reflection and comment on the nature of human relationships and the power of communications technology to change lives and social structures.

...Community Center for Television Production... gives the people of the Triple Cities area access to portable video equipment. A government department wanting to communicate more effectively with the community by giving specific answers to questions is welcome. Anyone who wants to just experiment with tv can use what we have to discover what he can do with television. ...decentralization of the television medium is a must if a community is to have a voice that mirrors its diversity and varying opinions. ... the community can become a studio because 1/2" equipment is portable, easy to operate, and relatively inexpensive. Dispersing television production capability throughout a community is holding up a mirror to the community so it can see itself.¹⁸

¹⁷Radical Software 5 (London: Gordon and Breech, 1972), p. 88.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 52.

The People's Video Theater in New York is an alternative media group working in metropolitan New York largely under the support of the New York State Council on the Arts. One of their pilot efforts has been "street video" where portable equipment is taken on the streets to record people talking about themselves and their neighborhoods and then playing back both questions and answers immediately there on the street and then later on the cable.

...Video Theater takes place primarily in the public sphere...we saw that portable video with live feedback and various styles of selective feedback could define a space where people could physically connect up with each other to create an information event. Initiated and recorded by a communications group with sensitivity to how to move information, tapes are shown to others who respond on tape and people have begun a process where new kinds of information are generated which they need and can use.¹⁹

This intensive concern with people and their own reactions to environment is the core of the video group's work. The group sees itself as a force working on behalf of the community in challenging the cable industry and broadcast television to creatively respond to human needs and problems. A quote from their New York experience is illuminating...

The predominant attitude in New York towards the Public Access channels is one of defensiveness and defeatism. Cable operators will only strive to develop public access so as to sustain and protect their own real interests laid down in the city franchise. It is obvious that one person can only watch one channel at one given time.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 42.

If people are making programs and digging each other over 2 or 3 Public Access channels, then the same people aren't watching commercial cable or broadcast programs, the potential advertising market decreases, commercial time is less valuable, profits lag, and ultimately the backbone of the information monopoly is broken.²⁰

This same consciousness of the limitations of commercial television is reflected in these video groups' strong critical attitudes towards the news-generating, news-reporting functions of broadcast television. Washington Community Video Center in Washington, D.C. has experimented with "newstapes" as a means of increasing the availability of local news within a specific neighborhood or community. Peripheral communities around a central city often suffer news distortion or total blackout because of the weight of a large urban news force and news presence. The Washington Center worked with the small Adams-Morgan community.

...local news, including the Adams-Morgan area, when done, is incomplete and without research work to understand the history of an issue. The few items...carried about our neighborhood end up as visual teasers of short length, that heighten out of proportion one aspect of an issue, and whose presentation in a vacuum makes involvement of people impossible.²¹

Obviously, the Washington group has greater expectations of news service than do most viewers. Not only does it need to be for a specific community, but it must be pre-

²⁰Ibid., p. 43.

²¹Community Video Report (Washington Community Video Center, Washington, D.C.) I:4 (Spring 1974), 3.

sented in such a way as to create an attitude of involvement within the community. This doesn't happen with any news service on broadcast channels, but it can happen with cable.

...we have tried various means of distribution and involvement of the neighborhood in the production. Our distribution has been based on two methods: the first source is placing the monitor in our storefront window, with an outside speaker. Benches are placed on the sidewalk; the second, is bringing the monitor and playback deck to places where people normally congregate, including restaurants, community centers, and other neighborhood locations. ...we are designing these tapes within a ten minute time frame... so we can put the tapes on ten minute cassette loops for continuous playback.²²

Another dimension of the visionary's use of portable television equipment is the concern with specific public issues. News services such as described above often deal with very specific hard issues and are aimed at provoking response and action on the part of resident viewers. The People's Video Theater has one program that serves as an outstanding example of this specific issue reporting.

Using Video in Health Care--people's video theater. An alternative media group working in metropolitan New York supported in part by grants from New York State Council on the Arts and in part by commercial/contracted work. 'Health Information' services are an attempt to ground/develop community-based television. Initially our approach was to interview people in the street and parks asking them about the kind of health care they received and what kind

²²Ibid.

of health information they could best make use of. ...felt their frustration at inability to link up their experience with the kind of information that the health establishment made available through the commercial media. ...we started to create health information events utilizing as much feedback as necessary to find ways of creating information about health concerns that people could trust and use. During the summer we made tapes dealing with the doctor-patient relationship in diagnostic skills....

The movement of these tapes was to try to bring together those sources of information and concern that are traditionally kept apart by institutional and class attitudes. The tape of V.D. was most successful. We went to a busy street with a Doctor and a Nurse, set up our equipment with live feedback, and began asking people about V.D. People quickly got into using the doctor and nurse as an information source for both their practical questions about V.D. as well as checking out some of their fears and fantasies of what it was all about. ...the street temporarily became a place devoted to people's creating information for themselves. Using video in this manner, we found we could analyze people's information needs and demonstrate possible ways of meeting those needs.²³

The reporting and analysis of specific community issues through community participation radically changes the shape and definition of what we have traditionally called "news". It offers an understanding of individuals --common persons--as newsmakers equal to, and greater than, the celebrities which broadcast television tends to build and perpetuate. Likewise, it creates authentic perspective and relationship to local community problems and persons, something which broadcast channels are simply incapable of doing either financially or aesthetically. While experi-

²³

Radical Software 5, pp. 42-43.

menters and cable operators certainly continue to press for professional polish and technique in their productions, the gloss and smooth delivery typical of professional network companies will never be a part of the cable neighborhood channel. Thus, part of an authentic communications process is built into the technology itself.

In addition to fostering communications within a community about community problems, the video porta-pak and cable channels offer us the possibility of looking within our institutional structures at our lives and relationships within those institutions. While much of in-house television never ventures beyond the walls of that institution, what does occur is worthy of note as guidelines for the general public. The efforts of several women videotape-makers within prison walls is a stunning example.

Apart from these advantages of 1/2", there is the fact that it is seen over the same television set that brings us commercial television, and the resulting juxtaposition of the two can be quite illuminating. To be continuously exposed to material which has nothing to do with our lives, via mass media, is alienating and confusing, because its familiarity makes it SEEM real. Seeing a tape which is about our own reality over the same television set can point up how unreal the other is. For people who have not been able to find a viable place within society, this kind of purchase on reality could make them feel more connected with the world. There is also something about seeing yourself on television--it creates perspective about your own importance.²⁴

²⁴Letter excerpt published in Radical Software #5, p. 70. Ann Arlen to Superintendent of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women, New York City.

Much of the work of visionaries in the video communications field focuses sharp attention on the individual personality in relationship with itself via the intermediary of the television camera and tape recorder. Psychological presuppositions are offered by many groups and individuals studying the video medium, but other observers note that television, while creating personal expression and experience, is essentially a medium for out-going communications. It is a medium which offers both accuracy in expression and immediacy in presentation. It is, as quoted in a UCLA publication, "...unlike photography and film (in that) they are picture-taking media, (while) videotape is picture-giving. The image is now. It is immediate."²⁵ Immediate and picture-giving are assets for an intensely personal experience, but they are also essential characteristics of a communications medium which can hold pace with the speed of a technological environment and with history which doubles every 10 years in simple content.

Vision and the Future

The development of cable as a medium of communications has produced a flurry of creative planning and fantasy regarding the uses of the technology. It is prudent to remember that what is labeled "fantasy" in describing

²⁵'African Art in Motion', UCLA Monthly (Alumni and Development Center, University of California at Los Angeles) IV:3 (December 1973-January 1974)

cable's potential is not an impossible function, but merely one in which sufficient technology does not yet exist to make it "economically feasible". This distinction is key. The limitations imposed upon cable, as upon much technology, is that of financial feasibility, not technical possibility. All of the "services" listed below are presently technically possible and pilot projects exist. The full employment of these and other cable functions is dependent upon available financing and consumer demand.

The description and programming suggestions made for cable tv thus far in this paper have been based on one-way communication only. Current FCC regulation now requires that all new installations of cable systems include the capacity for two-way communications between home and studio facilities. This means that a television viewer could respond to information displayed on the video screen or carried by the audio track, or carried by a data channel for printout in various forms for consumer use. The simplest of response mechanisms consists of several push-buttons attached by cable to the television receiver. In response to inquiry, a viewer may push one or more of the buttons, individually or simultaneously, to transmit a "yes", "no", 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., or coded combination of the above. More advanced feedback mechanisms consist of voice communications, often using existing telephone lines to supplement the cable. A large number of school dis-

tricts currently use telephone equipment and cable "cables" to inter-connect bed-bound students with classroom teachers. The student views the teacher and teaching materials and hears the teacher's comments and questions. When ready to reply to contribute to discussion, the student signals the teacher by an open telephone line and the teacher switches a camera and microphone at the student's bedside to a P.A. function within the classroom. The student is heard and seen by the teacher, and students, via television sets.

The most sophisticated, and expensive, form of communications link-up in a two-way cable system is the data or telemetry channels. Many cities have written into their franchises the wiring and installation of home and public alarm devices. When installed, the sensor devices can detect an intruder, the presence of heat or flame, the presence of moisture, or a particular, pre-set level of noise. The response of the sensor can be monitored in police and fire stations and equipment dispatched directly without human voice communications.

Public utilities are currently proposing data channels which will automatically read gas, water, and electric meters via cable. Computer facilities at the Head-End equipment will locate, read, and process a customer's electric bill without any direct human contact. When inter-faced with bank computer systems, billing procedures will be a matter of data exchange between the

electric company account and the home-owner's bank account. No paper, or acknowledgement, will change hands.

The most advanced data system under current development is the facsimile production unit which will produce a linear, paper-set copy of desired information. As an example, instead of having the morning newspaper delivered to your door, a person may tune in the appropriate news data channel and view an electronic character display of each page of the morning paper. His own signals will control the rate at which new pages or articles are displayed. If he is in a hurry that morning and can't "view" the news, he can press the proper button sequence, or dial the digits on a phone instrument, and a photographic (xerox) facsimile or electric-typed copy of the paper will be produced on his home facsimile machine. With computer programming setting up the delivery, a 35-page edition, including stock market and all schedules reports, will be completed in about 3-1/2 minutes. The technology involved in this kind of facsimile display would apply to any form of written material, including library books, periodicals, bills, legal documents, etc. A continuous supply of literature or documents would be available for display or copy without anyone ever leaving the home. In a later section, some attention will be paid to the response of libraries to the cable revolution. Many large city and county libraries are heavily involved in cable franchise applica-

tions and operations, projecting towards the day when much of their service functions will be performed via the cable and facsimile machines.

The above categories define the basic technological fields presently under development in the cable industry. A further listing of future cable services will broaden the perspective in which later decisions and planning can be made by the church.

Computer-Aided Instruction - specifically designed educational programs tailored to individual student needs and capabilities and delivered via cable with return student response.

Continuing Education - a wide variety of home instruction courses delivered on specialized channels upon demand.

Secretarial Assistance - currently, business persons may phone-in correspondence dictation for 24-hour recording and transcription. Cable extends this function to the home with facsimile feedback.

Research - computer assisted research in archives, libraries, and public and private agencies. Requests delivered via specialized channels with display or facsimile production.

Office files and resources in remote locations - materials would be available for home-based office workers. Technology includes coded access functions to limit information to designated personnel.

Conferences and Consultations - use of two-way functions to hold meetings and conferences via video and audio capacities without leaving homes, or at offices in different locations.

All Banking Services - all normal deposit, withdrawal, bill-paying functions conducted via cable channels with either mailed or facsimile confirmation or records.

Reservations - tickets, schedules, information on continuous display on designated channel or particular response via direct inquiry.

Dedicated Newspaper or Information Service - similar to present teletype and stock tickertape, specialized channels could provide particular area subject information on 24 hour availability status.

Schedule - Personal Agenda - large corporations can provide their executives and employees with daily agendas for corporation meetings, functions, and progress reports.

Consultant Information - specialized public agencies could provide scheduled subject-matter programs or respond to specific requests. For example, Legal Aid Society, Public Social Services, Employment Agencies, Tax Department, Public Health, etc. could conduct much of their public information programs via specialized channel. For individual requests for information, designated channels and time could deliver information to individuals confined to house or at distances from agency's location.

Cashless-Checkless transactions - using computer processing to transfer funds between accounts directly.

Shopping - specialized cable channels - commercial channels for display of consumer goods by department stores and ordering by reverse tele-data channel.

Groceries - in conjunction with previously mentioned shopping comparison programming, consumers could order groceries directly from market for delivery to home. Video channel would allow viewing of produce, etc.

Entertainment - movies and tapes of first-run films, plays, or cultural events - either from public performance or works commissioned directly for use by cable and payment from designated channel revenues.

Mail Delivery - all routine, first-class mail and mass advertising mail delivered via video characters or facsimile reproduction. Ad mail could be summarized in hourly cycles over designated channels thus extending market at lower cost and reducing paper and time.

SOME PROBLEMS AND CHURCH RESPONSE

There are a wide variety of problems with the coming cable revolution in communications. Several of these have been indicated previously, but bear repeating. Others will be mentioned here as a preparation for discussion in the fourth chapter.

Much of the present critique which the church and like social agencies could offer is based on their particular self-understandings both of man and of society. The Church, in present form, is experiencing considerable ambiguity both about its present visible, structural form, and about its traditional base within the framework of the Bible and the historical Church. Traditional models of theological and organizational self-understanding are in question and the clergy and laymen's own roles are under considerable scrutiny. In chapter III, Christology informs organizational principle and goals for the Church and these will be critiqued with regard to relevance to emerging social, political, structures--such as cable television. For the present, the following problems will have to be considered:

1. The preparation of the enabling franchise. The Church in any community bears a responsibility to see that the process of franchise development is a process for the entire community. Recognizing the tremendous change in spatial, temporal, and political relationships that cable can produce, the potential for creating new "community" or "communities" within an existing community simply cannot be ignored. As a historical agent of community-building, the Church has valuable experience to share and a creative, learned viewpoint to build with.
2. Because of its broad and diverse community base, the Church may well be the uniquely qualified agent to bring together public opinion and discussion of the uses of cable within a community.
3. As a traditional defender and aid to the poor, powerless, and unorganized, the Church must work to help create a voice for these peoples in the planning of a cable system. Precisely because cable can bring about communication and organization within a traditionally unorganized community, the cable is an essential future element in the future mission of the Church to God's people.
4. The cable as an interactive and accessible communications medium for people who have never had either organization or access to a communications medium means that the Church will have new voices to listen to as it shapes its ministries. Cable can bring "into" the Church diversity and new identities for all of God's people and the Church's ability to listen will determine its ability to serve.
5. The Church can use cable as a means to communicate and minister to God's people. It CANNOT use cable in the traditional ways in which the Church has used mass media--for evangelism, packaged worship, one-way, linear speaking-to communications.
6. Cable Television and its attendant technology and services is but a small foretaste of the future. Its present, rapidly-developing forms can tell us much about the future of social structures and the world in which we will live. The Church's ability to listen, understand, interpret, and bear witness to the Gospel in its present and future forms will largely be determined by its response to such technology and the resulting social change.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTOLOGICAL IMAGES AS GUIDES FOR CHRISTIAN MISSION

"Following the death of Jesus Christ, there was a period of readjustment that lasted approximately one million years."

- Kurt Vonnegutt¹

Doing theology is never an isolated task. In its most straight-forward occurrence, it is a task involving inter-disciplinary research, interpretation, and careful application. At its most critical and involved points, it is a complex and demanding job that calls for reverence for tradition in tension with futuristic vision. When attempted by amateurs without serious preparation in study and reflection, it can be little more than proof-texting. Yet, theology is a task done by most people--deliberately or unconsciously, trained or untrained. Within the Church, theology is ongoing--by laymen, clergy, and full-time theologians in a variety of settings. The efforts to create disciplined, organized reflection about the nature of God and the relation of God to man, and to man's world, is unceasing. It is continuous because the world is continuous in its change, its directions, its awareness, feeling, and perception.

¹Kurt Vonnegutt, The Sirens of Titan

The future, with its unprecedented volume and influence of planned and unplanned change, calls for the best theological work that the Church is capable of. Moreover, what is needed is theology in new fields, new directions, new theology for new realities. This chapter is part of an attempt to examine one particular area of future communications development and create a pattern of theological reflection upon that area. It is a model of how to do theology for local INSTITUTIONAL church structures dealing with cable television. The institutional church itself is a participant, and more often, a victim of ever-increasing change. As the future rushes into the present, the local church is struggling to re-claim, re-interpret, and create a new theology for understanding and relating to events new to its experience. If the church can do its theology on and with the new realities of the present and future, it can survive in ever-evolving new forms for ministry. If it does not do this theological task, it will cease to exist as a communicating, effective agent in society, at least as far as the institution is concerned.

Additional concerns shape this chapter's work. First, the rate of change and newness in the world is faster than it has ever been in recorded history. Speed alone has created and continues to create incredible changes for the church to acknowledge and respond to. The results of revolutionary hybrid technology are producing a

world in which familiar patterns, forms, groundwork, and responses are no longer in existence. New patterns and responses must be created in response to a world which does not remain constant long enough for traditional Church patterns and theologizing to get a "fix" on what is now present and what is now happening. The institutional church faces, from behind, the task of radically re-interpreting its mission, form, and theology, and creating new ministry and new forms of community in which to live and celebrate. My brother, a professor in Theology and New Testament at an east coast school, has often reminded me that my demand for radical change in the church, and even abandonment of its present forms, is insensitive to those people currently within church walls and programs. Countless others, long freed of institutional behavior patterns, still watch the church for signs of renewal and life. Hence, to be a radical agent for change in the Church is to be aware of the need for bridges of evolution over which traditional church-people may cross and enter into new forms. This chapter attempts to work from a traditional theological base which is presently a strong force for local church self-understanding--that of Christology.

Three patterns of Christology will be briefly outlined, and a working summary will be made of each for comparison. Each pattern is described in those concepts and terms which are most familiar to local congregations.

Elaboration of these basic Christological forms will then be made and their implications for local church institutional life will be specified. Finally, specific references will be made for the use of these Christological images as guides for local churches engaging in significant community organizational work. In this final section, and in chapter four, application of these images is made to the area of cable television development and programming.

Acknowledging the other functions which study, reflection, and interpretation of the life and work of Jesus have given Christian scholarship, it is only the use of Christology to build theories and concepts of the church that will concern us here. In one sense, we can use Christological studies as a kind of design process for building theological models of the local church. In worship, the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, has been called the "head" of the Church. The Christian Church, in a similar manner, is often referred to as the "body" of Christ. Our understandings of Christ's work and his self-understanding have shaped institutional church form and practice. Within the local church, Jesus Christ is the central source of, and the figure in, symbolic roles; he is the means of understanding God's relationship with man, particularly as it may occur within the Church; and usually in trinitarian language, Christ is understood as the revealing to man of what tasks the local church is to be about.

EMIL BRUNNER - 'CHRIST THE MEDIATOR'

Brunner's Christology, written in 1934, is the archetype of "theologia mysterium" which emphasizes the mystery of the person and work of Christ. Book Three, entitled The Work of the Mediator, variously defines the ways in which Jesus Christ is THE mediator between the hidden, unknowable God and the revealed and knowable, yet mysterious, God. It is through Christ that man knows about God. Brunner states this clearly and repeatedly:

If Christ means anything at all, it is simply and solely because through Him God is revealed, the eternal and unchangeable God. ...Jesus Christ is the window through which we see God.²

This interpretation of the life and work of Christ filtered down to the church pews and became part of an individual churchgoer's vague consciousness about the relationship between God and Christ. The "Son of God" was and is the most common public and private expression of this relationship, although it was subjected to common distortions of social and familial understanding. But Brunner does not intend to leave the person of Christ in such a simplified metaphor. Instead, his work focuses on the paradoxical unity which is the essence of Christ's interdependence upon God. To paraphrase Brunner's thesis in the

²Emil Brunner, The Mediator (London: Lutterworth Press, 1946), p. 400.

modern language of McLuan, "The medium is the Message". It is in Christ that God's act and Word are one.

Brunner states that Christ's Being is God's act for us. Christ is the truth and that truth itself is an act. It is God's act for us. It is the work of Christ that best illuminates his paradoxical nature as Christ:

The existence of the God-man as such, constitutes revelation and salvation. This is why He is called the Mediator, not primarily on account of His work, but because of what He is in Himself....³

The Mediator in His Person, by His very 'constitution' is the mediation between creator and fallen creature, in a double connection: as the Mediator of revelation and the Mediator of reconciliation.⁴

For Brunner, Christ is the special act which is revelation. The Being of Christ as the Mediator between God and Man is an act of revelation by which God makes known that He Himself has come to Man. "God reveals Himself for His own sake, in order to create His Kingdom, in order to manifest His glory, in order to restore His own order, His Dominion."⁵

It is in and through Christ that the word of forgiveness is unconditionally pronounced. It is pronounced with authority as the act of salvation for Man. The Being of Christ as God's act is the salvation-event, it is forgiveness in itself. Christ Himself is God's forgiveness

³Ibid., p. 404.

⁴Ibid., p. 406.

⁵Ibid., p. 408.

and reconciliation of man to Himself.

The historical and psychological appearance of Jesus was primarily that of a Jewish Rabbi, a teacher of the Torah. It is Brunner's contention that Jesus' work is not the teaching of morality, because he has no interest in intermediate conditions. Jesus' work is not teaching, but proclamation of the unconditional law of God. Jesus unveils the last things, He brings a new message and because He does so, Jesus does not fill the role of a Rabbi.

Rather than perform the Rabbi's duty of the teaching of morality, Brunner claims that Jesus is a prophet in that he brings a new message. His message is that of a reversal of standards--"those who are first in earth's kingdom shall be last in the Kingdom of God". Jesus' message is the devaluation of customary ethical religion and the pronouncement that the Word of Forgiveness is unconditionally present for all men. Jesus dares to speak of the Fact that the Kingdom of God has come, that it is now present. In contradiction of a prophet's customary proclamation of the "coming" kingdom, Jesus proclaims that the Kingdom of God has come, that it is a transcendent Kingdom which comes from the other side to be with man. Thus, for Brunner, Jesus is not a Rabbi or teacher, and He is more than a prophet, for He proclaims a present reality. According to His own claim, Jesus is the Son of God, the present Kingdom, the revelation of God in God's own act.

In Brunner's words, "His self-testimony points towards His own Word, which He is."⁶

In Brunner's thought, the only genuine human suffering is that which is bound up with God. It is God's coming to us in our suffering that marks His revelation and reconciliation. And it is the cross which is the divine act of reconciliation. Between man and God there is a huge obstacle--sin, or rather, guilt. "Guilt is an absolutely personal relationship, it is a perverted attitude towards God. The central point in every human being is his attitude towards God. Our sin has perverted our attitude towards God....and, therefore, his attitude towards us has also changed."⁷

Guilt is the element in sin by which it belongs to the past. According to Brunner, "The sinner can never repent in proportion to his sin....(neither is it) a logical necessity for God to forgive."⁸ The Bible describes forgiveness as an unimaginable revelation, as something known only by an explicit, divine declaration. Yet forgiveness must be granted by God in such a way that his holiness will be maintained. "It is the cross which is the event by which God makes known His holiness and His love simultaneously."⁹ The cross is not a symbol, but an

⁶Ibid., p. 429.

⁸Ibid., p. 447.

⁷Ibid., p. 443.

⁹Ibid., p. 450.

act of revelation. It is not individualistic, "fanatic" revelation, but unrepeatable and open to all. The cross as an act of love is a unique, and historical event.

Only in Christ is humanity able to perceive its immense sin, its immense burden of guilt, the knowledge of which is necessary for an objective act of Atonement.¹⁰ Christ is the expiation for our guilt. His expiatory sacrifice is in order that the obstacle (sin) may be removed from between God and man.

Thus, Christ is the visible sign to men that they bear a burden of guilt. Christ is simultaneously the sign that God has granted forgiveness. Indeed, Christ is that act of forgiveness. Brunner has a great deal more to say of the person and work of Christ, and he does so in great detail. However, this rough outline of his understanding of Christ will be sufficient for our examination of the Church, in a Christological model.

Brunner does give some indication of the nature of the Church as it is shaped by his understanding of the life and work of Christ. The Church is a part of the same mystical relationship and being which characterizes Brunner's work and life of Christ. The Church is the object of the Divine Will of revelation; it is the unity of believers based on the Divine Will. It is, in short, the Kingdom of the King, of Christ.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 451.

¹¹ Ibid., 587.

It is Brunner's belief that the Bible is not concerned with the individual as such. The Bible as a matter of course, refers its teaching and message to "the people of God." The New Testament fulfillment of the revelation was not to deepen the personal religion of the individual, but was an extension of the "people of God" to the world of the Gentiles.

The "ecclesia" is the people of God, chosen and elect, set free from national limitations.¹² It is not a means, but an end in itself. It is the community of those who have been reconciled by the act of God in Jesus Christ. It is the community of those who are justified by their belief--it is a community of those who believe in what God has done in Jesus Christ. Christ and the Church belong to each other.

The Church is an end, the end, in itself. But it is served by temporal institutions and structures which are merely means to an end. Brunner lists institutions, constitutions, and apparatus of the Church as means for the Church. The Church is service, it serves a higher end than itself--it exists for the sake of the message which is Jesus Christ, the head of the Church.¹³

Brunner's Dogmatics examines the role and understanding of the Church in greater detail. However, rather than introduce a further level of excessive mystical rela-

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 597.

tionships and functions, it will be sufficient to extrapolate from the references provided by the above summary of his Christology. These references to the life and role of Christ and the Church will be the basis of the following descriptions of the Church's task.

First, the Church in its life and work is the teacher of the Act and Word of God in Christ. It is the Church which explains what God has done for Man in the person of Jesus insofar as this act is capable of explanation and proclamation by man.

Second, it is through the Church as the Body of Christ that man knows anything about God. What God is like is the input into the world given uniquely by Christ and the Church.

Third, the Church is the social agent of the proclamation of the word of forgiveness which was in and is Christ. As an institution in contemporary society, the Church's existence is a witness to the act of God's reconciliation and forgiveness in Christ.

Fourth, in all of the above tasks, the Church acts as a mediator of the "Good News" between God in Christ and man. The role of mediator is one in which the Church continuously searches for the means which will communicate God's work to contemporary man. The Word and Act of God, historically in Christ, are continually repeated in the witness and presence of the Church as the community of

those who are reconciled. The Church is a mediator of God's act in that it is the Kingdom of God--it is the object of the divine will of revelation.

JAMES M. GUSTAFSON - 'CHRIST THE ILLUMINATIVE NORM'

The work of James Gustafson is primarily a moral christology. That is, it asks the question, "What claims for the significance of Christ for the moral life do theologians specifically make or apparently assume?"¹⁴ He answers this question clearly, "The objective reality of the Christian moral life is Jesus Christ, Lord of Creation. King and Head of every man."¹⁵ The reality of the moral life is measured in three distinct categories:

First, what are the criteria, principles, values, or models for action? what are the duties?

Second, what is the nature and character of the moral self? what are the virtues?

Third, what is the nature and locus of value in the moral life? what is the good?

In short, movement along and towards the moral life is to be gauged by stated duties, virtues, and a desired good. Along with F. D. Maurice, Gustafson posits the existence of a universal moral kingdom to which the 'followers of Christ are a witness. Christ's followers, it is

¹⁴James Gustafson, Christ and the Moral Life (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 1.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 14.

expected, will live a moral life, which is a witness to Christ in the life of the world.

Gustafson suggests some particular ways in which we may know Christ as the objective reality for the moral life. He lists the following as the "realities" of Christ by which we know him and his work:

Christ is Lord of All: The creation and redemption of all things is through Jesus Christ. All that men need do is witness to the Lordship of Christ by living the moral life.¹⁶

Christ is the Victor over Sin: The coming and presence of Christ signifies the final victory over sin. This act of goodness is the act of God and without man's initiative. Man is not the one who acts. Man is the means through which the power and goodness of God acts.¹⁷

God, not Man, Is the Source of Moral Action: Man acts as God's agent and his action is good insofar as it is sanctified. Man is not the source of his own good or of his moral action. God's act in Christ is the source and cause of man's moral action.¹⁸

These ways of knowing Christ as objective reality are acts of faith. They are taken by men who understand their lives to be different as a result of God's act in history in Jesus Christ. Given these "realities" of faith

¹⁶Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 23.

as the basis of the Christian moral life, Gustafson puts forth some particulars of Christian experience of the reality of Jesus Christ. For the Christian Church, the Christian community, the Christian as individual believer, Jesus Christ is the common element. He is the one who as historical figure, represents the origin of a continuing historical community of trust and loyalty.¹⁹ It is this historical community, identified in and as the Church, that is the maintaining source of historical tradition insofar as it reflects and moves in a manner consistent with loyalty to Jesus Christ, the head of the Church.

The themes of trust and loyalty are those which the Christian community has adopted for itself out of common understanding of the life and work of Jesus Christ. The Christian Church points to the Gospel record of Jesus' own confidence in the mercy and goodness of God. The Church seeks to set forth its own life in witness to that Biblical witness to a universal power in which men can trust. This witness to the witness is an expression of trust and loyalty in the ultimate power and goodness of God throughout all history. It is these themes of trust and loyalty, of confidence in Christ, that are what Gustafson calls the perspective and posture of the Christian moral life.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 240.

With this perspective of historical trust in God's goodness and loyalty to Christ, it is the disposition of the Christian's moral self that Gustafson examines. "The disposition," says Gustafson, "is the self's attitudes, habits, or persistent tendencies."²⁰ It is the disposition which orients the Christian life in this world. It is these attitudes by which the follower of Christ interprets the world in which he finds himself and through which he is a witness to the power and goodness of God. The disposition is not a fixed or final perception of the Christian reality. Rather, it is a frame of reference in which the Christian seeks out His work and witness, and in which he shares community with fellow believers.

In Gustafson's work, the disposition(s) of the moral self is (are) hope and freedom. Hope is the human attitude which correlates with the historical perspective of trust in God's goodness and power. Hope is the demonstration in human activity of spiritual trust in the power and work of Jesus Christ. In the Christian community of understanding, hope is one man's bearing towards another. It is the attitude which affirms the emergent possibilities of life under the goodness of God.²¹ It is the attitude of hope which gives meaning to the present and confidence in the future. The absence of hope brings despair and a sense of fatedness.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 248.

²¹ Ibid., p. 249.

Freedom is a parallel disposition of the Christian moral self. Freedom is the carrier of hope. It is part of the Christian's readiness to enter into and respond to the future. It is an inner freedom which is "possessed" as a response to God's love and goodness. "The absence of freedom", according to Gustafson, "is cowardice and excessive scrupulosity."²²

Gustafson is careful to point out that disposition is not intention. That is, one's attitude as general orientation and response to life is not the same as specific moral intentions which occur in the life of an individual Christian. The category of intention is informed by trust and loyalty to and in Jesus Christ. It is guided by the dispositions of hope and freedom. Individual intentions ought to be in accord with one's basic religious convictions, according to Gustafson, and it is in the development and recognition of consistency in these intentions that the self finds identity. This category seems almost extraneous to Gustafson's basic line of thought. "Basic religious convictions" seems to separate the informing elements of the moral life from the basic theology explicit in one's worship and learning of the Christian experience. Intention does serve to illuminate Gustafson's conception of Christian identity as the development of consistency in one's moral intentions. This understanding

²² Ibid., p. 253.

gives a needed element to personal growth and development within the Christian community and perspective of trust and loyalty. And it is this emerging identity which is the human complement for viewing Christ as the norm of the Christian moral life.

Gustafson puts forth three areas of man's perspective and disposition in which the historical figure of Christ serves as a norm for determining acts and behaviour:

1. Christ provides for the Christian the normative point for theological interpretation of what God wills in the time and place of his life.
2. The historical figure of Jesus Christ in the New Testament with all its diversity is normative as being the specific instance in which trust in God, and words and deeds towards men, find their most perfect correlation.
3. Insofar as discipleship to Christ is concerned, the Christian is obliged to consider Christ as the most important norm among others that he brings to bear upon a moral judgement.²³

These areas are historically based in Christian experience of God's goodness as recorded in the Gospel. To evoke Christ as the norm for our moral life is to consider if our intentions are consistent with loyalty to Jesus Christ.

While Gustafson does not provide a specific description of the Church's life and work in detail, his christology does make clear references to a number of tasks which the Church must perform to aid and illuminate

²³Ibid., p. 265ff.

Christ as norm. Briefly, key tasks can be stated here.

First, the Church is the historical tie and maintaining agent for the Christian interpretation of God's act in and of Jesus Christ. It is that common element of shared experience and teaching which forms Christian community and illuminates the individual Christian moral life.

Second, it is the illuminator, the explainer of the Christian moral life. It is the bearer of the tradition and serves as the continuing historical community which represents and reveals in its life the trust and loyalty a Christian places in Christ.

Third, it is the worshipping community in which thanks and expression are given to God's act in Jesus Christ. It is in the worship of the Church that Christians witness to their belief in hope and freedom as the disposition of the Christian moral life. In the Christian community it is in one member's relationship to another that hope and freedom are affirmed as the manner of being.

Fourth, to invoke Christ as norm for Christian experience and action is to also acknowledge that moral acts and judgement occur from assessment of man's historical and present situation in life. In other terminology, the Church is in the world and its actions and judgements about the world are based on assessments of information about what's going on in any time and place. The Church

provides interpretation of antecedents and possible consequences of actions.²⁴

Fifth, the Church, representing the Christian normative stance, takes its place alongside of other social institutions as one of several contemporary agents competing for man's attention and loyalty. The Church, according to Gustafson, is the most important norm for Christians making judgements on moral life and action. The Church "competes" in the sense that in its institutional form and life, it must witness to the historical community and the illuminative norms which it holds for man's life, and it must do so in the presence of other norms and life styles which claim man's loyalty.

DOROTHEE SOELLE - 'CHRIST THE REPRESENTATIVE'

Dorothee Soelle has re-examined one of the oldest titles of Christ, that of Representative, and given us a re-worked christology which reclaims the concreteness the title once had in salvation history. Christ's office was interpreted by the Church as a three-fold activity. Within the priestly office, the doctrine of Christ's representative nature is dealt with. Traditionally, we have understood that Christ represented us in reconciliation before God and he represented God in revealing grace to mankind.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 264.

Soelle goes to detailed lengths to examine the meaning of the term "representation". She concludes that the concept would have meaning in theology only if it is firmly rooted in and understood in human relationships in society.²⁵ Its meaning must be familiar to us. To represent someone means to take responsibility for him temporarily. It is a temporary expedient and it functions in a specific and limited manner. Only a particular role is to be represented. Further, representation is not to be confused with substitution. In representation, the theme is temporary and limited, but it is dependent upon memory. Memory safeguards the one who is represented and assures re-instatement upon return. Substitution is replacement in which what is replaced is treated as unavailable, no longer present, permanently absent, and without memory. In substitution, the replacement represents the other person completely and unconditionally.²⁶

Soelle derives the elements of this christology by first viewing the Church's traditional understanding of Christ as representative between man and God and, second, by contrasting that with man's own awareness and reaction to the replaceability and interchangeability of man ex-

²⁵Dorothee Soelle, Christ the Representative (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. 15.

²⁶Ibid., p. 21.

perienced in a world of division of labor and mass-produced goods. The historical thesis is that Christ represents man, hence, replaces him before God, and the present anti-thesis is that man is irreplaceable, yet his roles are interchangeable. Our experience has rebelled against man as a replaceable and interchangeable object and we hold to this belief. Soelle's synthesis is that Man is irreplaceable but still representable.²⁷

Before expanding the proposed synthesis, Soelle sets out the groundwork of identity as the element in which the synthesis has contextual meaning.

Man's longing for true identity is an essential theme of his existence. Soelle takes this theme and correlates it with the interpretation of God as "...the one who by his interest guarantees the infinite value (eg identity) of the subject."²⁸ God is the power which guarantees the possibility of each man having a unique and true identity. God's act of love for me makes me irreplaceable and guarantees for me identity. It guarantees for me representation and gives time for me to seek identity. I am irreplaceable for those who love me. I am irreplaceable for those who set their hope in me.

It is society that puts pressure on man to be an interchangeable and replaceable object. It seeks to represent man by assigning him roles. In such manner, man

²⁷Ibid., p. 43.

²⁸Ibid., p. 44.

is dependent upon society. Man seeking unique identity, and thereby rejecting total replaceability, needs time. Time is hope for those who seek identity. The seeking of identity is not a permanent search. It is temporary and therefore representation is also temporary and conditional.

Soelle makes the distinction between a Christ who is final and needs no future--the Christ of sacramental obligation--and a Christ who is provisional, that is, incomplete and on-going. It is the provisional Christ that is of great significance in a theology that takes into account man's need for identity. The man who is without identity, without a future, is the one who needs a provisional Christ. The incomplete and yet unceasing presence of Christ is the representation that assures man that his future remains open to him.²⁹

Irreplaceability is maintained by man's dependence upon the one who represents him. Christ is our representative only for a time, conditionally and incompletely--not replacing us thereby.³⁰

In like manner, Soelle points out that a provisional Christ, one who is not final, is a Christ with whom man can identify. It is Christ's continuing identification with us that marks him as provisional and for us. This identification with us is Christ's acceptance of us without

²⁹Ibid., p. 107.

³⁰Ibid., p. 103.

reservation, without limit or condition. For Soelle, Christ is the true teacher for whom teaching is self-effacement and withdrawal. The true teacher identifies with his pupils and is responsible for the ones who are immature and incapable. It is Christ's provisionality as teacher that assures that a pupil's opportunities, yet unknown, will not be wasted. As representative, he safeguards the interests of those whom he represents. He knows more about his "pupils" than they know about themselves.³¹

To further establish Christ's identification with us, Soelle turns to the problems of suffering and punishment. In essence, the question is, "In what manner does Christ share our suffering in order that he may further identify with us?" Soelle draws upon the work of Makarenko to illustrate a theory of punishment in which the one who punishes shares the punishment with the one who is punished. Punishment is therein a personal transaction costing the "teacher" as much as the "pupil".³² Christ's provisional nature means that in representing us, he punishes himself as well as us. Again, because it is personal, punishment deals with our sense of hope and hopelessness. Christ suffers with us in everything that denies the presence of hope. It is man's own work that destroys his hope, and he is, therefore, the agent of his own punishment.

³¹Ibid., p. 116.

³²Ibid., p. 119.

Christ is dependent upon us in the same way that anyone who represents us is dependent upon our assent for that representation. His provisional nature as the forerunner is dependent upon our willingness to follow him. This provisional nature is illustrated in Soelle's analysis of cross and resurrection. The resurrection is not Christ's final victory over suffering, but the resurrection cross is a sign of hope in that Christ was, and continues to be, willing to suffer for us. In resurrection theology, the world is already redeemed and history is, therefore, predetermined, but the resurrection represented by the cross is a sign of the dawn, a pledge of redemption. The cross is the sign that Christ identifies with us and continues to suffer with us.

Traditional theology placed Christ as God's representative to us, as God revealed. The Death of God movement in recent years emphasized that Christ is the representative of a God who is no longer present in the world. God no longer presents himself in the manner claimed by previous religious experience. Christ is the representative of a God who is no longer immediately present.³³ To recall the theme of identity, the "death" of God means that God's identity is now in the future and Christ is his forerunner holding open the possibility of identity for God and

³³Ibid., p. 132.

for us. "Christ" becomes a metaphor for the promise of identity in a world that seeks anonymity. Christ represents the God who is absent allowing him time to appear and a future in which to place his identity for man to see. In the present Christ is that representative of God and man in the area of non-identity.

In traditional language, the Incarnation is the event in which Christ comes to play God's role in the world. Christ is dependent upon God who is in non-identity until the future, and upon man, who is presently in non-identity and allows Christ to be a provisional representative for him in the future. What the Church once called "kingdom of God" in traditional language, we may now call God's new identity in the future. In the present, God in Christ suffers through his unrealized existence and his identification with this world. What Christians have in common is their participation in the sufferings of God in Christ.

Soelle extends her christology into active models for the life and work of the Church. The above summary is limited, but sufficient to ground an understanding of the Church in which the image of Christ is that of representative. Several areas of the Church's life are clearly delineated.

First, "if Christ provisionally represents us before God, this means that the company of believers in Christ must also take responsibility for someone before God....For the Church, this someone can only be the world, which the Church represents before God."³⁴ In the manner of representative that Christ makes of himself on our behalf, so the Church represents the world.

Second, because Christ is the representative of those who seek identity in a nonhuman (non-identity) world, he may conceivably be no longer needed in a world which becomes human and has identity. So the Church may conceive a world in which it has itself become superfluous. The Church must understand its life and work in the light of representation of non-identity becoming identity and therefore no longer needed.

Third, the task of the organized Church is the naming, or calling out to those in non-identity of the hope of identity. In those outside of named Christianity, the Church seeks to educate the consciousness of (an) anonymous Christianity.

Fourth, the task of the Church is to suffer with those who are their own agents of hopelessness and destruction of hope. It is the Church's role to become dependent upon the world in the same manner in which Christ is dependent upon the Church. When prayer identifies with the

³⁴Ibid., p. 112.

world and its seeking for hope and identity it puts man and the world before God in Christ. This is the only genuine prayer.

Fifth, the Church is a true teacher, safeguarding the opportunities and interests of its pupils. It asserts its presence in such place and manner as will hold the future open for them. It holds up the possibility of identity in the future.

FROM THEOLOGICAL MODELS TO INSTITUTIONAL ONES

The vague consciousness of local churchpeople regarding theological guidelines for church action has already been mentioned. The reasons for this characteristic of the local church appear to have come about through many years of increasing separation between pulpit and pew. The theologically-trained clergy too often failed to provide adequate explanation or foundation for traditional mystical experience within the church's recorded history. This is not to say that mystery or mystical non-rational understanding cannot be part of theology understood by local congregations. It is, however, essential that the person and work of Christ be seen within the context of a historical community whose interpretation and expression changes and continues to change even into the present time.

It is, in my mind, an open question as to whether or not the use of mystical categories assists an individual

in grasping the importance of the life and work of Christ for his own life. Surely such categories are essential in appreciating the historical context out of which the Church has grown. Even if mystery is a useful category of interpretation, mystical symbolism and myth can be made contemporary with experience and reality which is available to the present believer and member of the Christian community. By the use of such contemporary symbols and myths to represent mystical elements of the Christian faith, the church member at the very least has access to reflection and his own creative interpretation of these elements of faith.

Another characteristic of doing theology in the local church is that the origination and, hence, ownership, of the metaphor or symbol of faith-mystery comes from the Church and its historical interpretation of Christ and the human community. For example: In the three illustrative patterns of christology presented earlier in this chapter, the key symbol roles of Christ's life and work are derived from secular human experience, but are claimed uniquely as metaphors by which the Christian understands Christ.

"Mediator," "Illuminative Norm," and "Representative" all have historical and present meanings in non-Christian and non-Church experience. Yet their use in christology claims unique interpretations which have meanings only within the Christian community. The parallels with non-Church experience are common ones in our own experience,

and these parallels are obviously necessary if the metaphors are to have any real value. What does appear as a limiting factor, however, is that Church-use of such metaphors is often restrictive, not encouraging church members to explore the real world for their own observations of the role or image which serves as a metaphor for christological reflection. In so-doing, such observation may in fact be "doing" theology in the contemporary world. Instead, theology as presented to the "people-in-the-pew" usually tends to exclude all interpretations related to the metaphor except the one focused on from the pulpit. The result may not be any radically different interpretation of the life and work of Christ--via the metaphor--but surely the man in the pew can add detail to the metaphorical image by his own unique experience. For example, the union worker may indeed experience something different when the metaphor of a "mediator" is used than the pastor intends by quoting Brunner. For that matter, the business manager seated in the pew across from the union worker may also have different perspectives of the "mediator". Both the manager and the worker can learn from and appreciate a carefully-interpreted slice of Brunner's christological image. But certainly, they can contribute something quite contemporary to the image of "mediator" as they have experienced it in labor-management negotiations! This is not meant to be simplistic to either Brunner's theology or to modern labor

and management relations! It is the case that present experience of real world experience can serve to "flesh out" dimensions of our theology and particularly of our images/metaphors of Christ.

A second aspect of real world experience is equally important. It was, and perhaps still is, a popular educational task in churches to "find God in the world" or to see "Him at work in His world". I remember several youth conferences where this task was organized as a kind of treasure hunt experience or, in other cases, as a role-play or simulation. Participants were given the task to go out into the streets, cafes, bus stations, etc. and record an image of Christ working in the world. Without theological training, the collected images closely paralleled New Testament records of Christ's life. The servant Christ was seen in bus boys, hotel clerks, baggage men, and a host of other real world roles. The rescue mission people on skid row also provided sharp and distinct images for discussion and reflection. To be sure this was not sophisticated theological work, but it was and is the kind of on-going theology which most Christ-conscious (in and out of church) people practice regularly.

In the above world experience, the metaphors of Christ were flesh and blood and they had been seen on the streets, at work, and in the world. The impact was strong and lasting. With careful follow-up discussion and con-

tinued study, theology was in fact being done, but this time the origination of the metaphor was grounded in experience from the real world and not from the pulpit which often aligned the metaphor with confusing mystical assumptions.

It is this kind of "real world treasure hunt" that provides background for employing the metaphors supplied by the three theologians presented earlier. It is my contention that theology done "in the streets" with real experiences suffers neither from dated mysticism nor distancing abstraction. What is necessary is that the church assume responsibility for drawing out implications and clearer consistent definitions of the images provided by church members from actual experience. Likewise, the Church provides the appreciation and re-statement, of the historical event and images of Christ and His Church. Viewed on a continuum, the historical Christ of the New Testament becomes flesh in present experience.

In the case of the three images provided by Brunner, Gustafson, and Soelle, the metaphors are strong, contemporary, and very useful for image application as guides for churchmen and churchwomen. In keeping with the above thesis, however, the three images should first be fleshed-out in order to provide concrete experience and demonstration of what Christ is to men in the world. In the case of Brunner's "Mediator", particularly, de-mystification

is essential and real-world fleshing out makes this possible.

But what is at stake here is theological modeling for the Church. What models exist for the Church? More importantly, how are models built from real world images upon which the Church has reflected theologically and historically? The Jesuit writer Avery Dulles has provided some directions for church modeling in his book Models of the Church. While Dulles gives basic import to the mystery of the Church--that which precludes us knowing all of what is the Church--he does provide the reader with a kind of comparative ecclesiology by which Church models may be examined.

It is Dulles' proposition that there are really two types of theological models according to their function. The first model is explanatory in that it synthesizes and explains in its structure what we already know and believe. The second type of model is exploratory and, as such, contains the capacity to lead to new theological insights.³⁵

The explanatory and exploratory models described above are dependent upon analyzed images. These images are usually provided by sources within the Church's own historical documents and experience. Within the religious community, images usually function as symbols, symbols that speak existentially to past and present circumstances

³⁵Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 22-23.

of human experience. And primarily, it has been the religious experience, or experience within the religious sphere, which has been the key for interpretation and evaluation of these symbols or images. Dulles believes that, "...to be effective, images must be rooted in the corporate experience of the faithful. Vital faith....may then be said to be demonstrated by the manufacturing of supplemental images."³⁶ Supplemental images "flesh out" human experience within religious structures of symbols and meanings. They provide the specific occurrence of religious experience within normal daily human experience. The ability of the clergy or layman to manufacture a new image with symbolic values out of his own life experience is the doing of theology upon which new models of the Christian community may be based.

According to Dulles, when images are employed reflectively and critically in order to deepen one's theoretical understanding of reality, that image then becomes a model.³⁷ And, like any good and functional model, that image produces a wealth of deductions about reality which may be tested in human experience.

The present problem in both Christology and local church program and structure is that the traditional images no longer function in such manner as to provide meaning for human experience or to produce deductions about reality

³⁶ Ibid., p. 18.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 20-21.

which the church and its members may test out in their own lives. This does not mean that traditional symbols are irrelevant. It means that they have greatest value when the Church recalls its history and seeks to explain and witness to God's action among men in an earlier time. Partly, the problem lies in our present inability to see Christology as a means rather than an end, a tool rather than a finished product. Traditional Christology may indeed be reclaimed for contemporary model-building by a re-examination of the means by which it is taught and by which it is used in ritual and liturgy within the Christian community. Since most of the local church's reference to Christological images has occurred in its worship and in broad general meanings, largely outside of original historical context, most laymen, and clergy, have only generalized and mythicized understandings of such images and any resultant modeling. Traditional images may be "re-modeled" and put in use by a local church and its community by shifting the emphasis from "explanatory" to "exploratory". In using the traditional symbols, it is desirable for clergymen to indicate their historical context and to help the community understanding of historical models of the church based on those images. But, it is critical that laymen and clergy alike understand that the images are explanatory only for historical reality as recorded in the church's own biblical and ecclesiastical functioning.

The historical images found in Christology are also exploratory and are intended to be used by a Christian community in defining new ministries, new ways of being "in the world", and new ways of structuring institutional and congregational life.

Much of contemporary "theology" as presented to local churchmen is defensive of present structure and programs. It is used as rationale or justification for what is presently the case in the church's life and structure. This has led to severe problems in the credibility of the local church to do theology in a way which is historically conscious, reflective of the present, and productive of model-building deductions for the congregation to test out. Too often, the scriptural and traditional church base is too meager to support contemporary modeling. Likewise, present church structure in administrative and decision-making categories is monopolistic and from the top down. This usually prevents creative images and alternative models from being seriously considered because they conflict with current practices and status-quo realities of power and authority.

When traditional christological images are used as re-enforcement for current structure and practices within the local church, dry rot occurs as a matter of course. The congregation loses any chance to consider traditional images in a new way. They find themselves largely out of

power for the process of model-building. And most important, they do not discover, or experience, traditional images as being of current value in exploring human realities once they are freed of usage as explanatory models and used as exploratory ones.

MASTER IMAGES FOR EXPLORATORY MODELS OF THE CHURCH

The essential task for contemporary churchmen and the professional theologians who would serve them is to reclaim traditional symbols for modern usage. It is their task to create the Master Images by which the immediate futures of the Church may be sought out and tested.

"Master Images" will be directional and be more an indication of style than role, of form than function. They will provide orientation and, in the midst of conflict, re-orientation for the churchman seeking to meet needs, to minister, to changing realities in changing societies.

Such images must "be prolific" in ideas to be tested. They must be capable of analysis by both trained and untrained churchmen. As exploratory images, they must contain the capacity to lead to new theological insights. Most importantly, they must have some correspondence with contemporary religious/spiritual experience. Avery Dulles adds an additional criteria which is most important considering the present state of ecumenical and inter-church cooperation and considering the rapidly growing tendency

to consider belief systems not traditional to our cultural experience. Dulles says that a model must be judged by its "...fruitfulness in enabling church members to relate successfully to those outside of their own group."³⁸ This criteria reflects the increasing pluralism of life within the local church and in the society "outside". Such pluralism has resulted in the erosion of traditional authority figures or belief systems and their institutions. It has also made flexibility and provisionality of greater value than ever before.

It need only be mentioned that the rise of pluralism within an institution which maintains both structural and value systems based on authority figures has produced conflict. Even more common than conflict has been the gradual unsettling of events and relationships that were once at the base of our social system. This unsettling has usually proved more destructive of organization and goals within the church than has conflict. Indeed, in recent years, the values of conflict and its resolution within such voluntary institutions as the church has proved extremely effective in creating new decision-making processes and setting new goals for the organization's members.

What has often been missing in the rise of pluralism and the descent of authoritarian structures has been

³⁸Ibid., p. 181.

transitional thinking between traditional value systems and emerging exploratory structures in which values and goals are not fixed and often confused. Within the local church, the greatest need seems to be for the theological and practical evolution of symbols common in the worshipping life of the congregation. Traditional Christological images require the greatest attention in helping churchmen to appreciate historical event and continuity and yet provide living reality-related models for church organization, self-understanding, and action. It is the on-going evolution of traditional symbols and the painstaking introduction of new ones that will be most effective in producing change in the local church. Rapid and disruptive change in symbols, values and goals, and institutional structures has usually meant that local churches become fragmented, disoriented, and powerless in the service of their own calling and of society's needs. Therefore, transitional organizational goal-setting and transitional theology must begin at the points most available to the local congregations. The initial subject matter and area of discussion and change must be familiar to them. In the local church, that area is christology--the naming of Christ and assignment of roles.

One final point needs to be made and stressed concerning new images generated by Christological titles. In essence, for most churchmen, the titles have derived their

meanings from the pulpit. They are historically-based, but remain past-oriented. They are a part of church history to which we give allegiance, but from which we derive little direction for present living. The task upon which this paper is based is the re-orientation of these images in a continuity from the past, through present experience, and into the future. The three Christologies presented earlier in this chapter have strong historical roots in scriptural and ecclesiological sources. It shall be the next task to "update" these images in a model of present and future-oriented mission for the local church.

The Mediator

Brunner's christology is the most complex and even mysterious of traditional christologies. As a model for local church structure and ministry, it seems of little value. Therefore, it will be necessary to reconstruct almost totally different definitions for "mediator" and the role of mediation from those used by Brunner. Brunner's work focuses primarily on the relationship between man and God, and views the role of Christ as mediator between the two. As a model for the church and its life and work, "Mediator" will have to refer to relationships between men, and specifically those, in which the Church, as the people of God, function as mediators between different men, groups, and ideas.

For Brunner, Christ as mediator is the act of forgiveness and revelation. For the contemporary church, mediator is the act of witness to belief in God as worked out by the Church. The work of the Church in the world and among men can be a sign of renewal in and for the local church.

For Brunner, Christ is the means by which man perceives his own immense burden of guilt and "discovers" that Christ is the expiatory sacrifice. In the contemporary church, Christ as mediator is the working image out of which men seek to relate to one another. Brunner's "ecclesia" as the chosen, elect "people of God" is a people set apart, set free from national limitations. For the local church seeking models for the present, the church is a part of the world, among the people of the world. It does not call people out of the world and set them apart. Yet, the church witnesses to a better way of life and offers continuing searching hope for a better life than man presently knows.

In a very real sense, Brunner's mediator provides the Church with the fundamental assertion that it alone has a unique contribution to make to men's knowledge about God. What Brunner testifies to over and over is that the Church is the bearer of the history and tradition about God's acts and presence among men. Contemporary men must accept that the Church is no longer the sole bearer of tradition and

the sole teacher about God, but it is a principal librarian and teacher of the Word and Act of God. The Church exists as a witness to God's forgiveness and reconciliation in Jesus Christ. But the Church no longer has the only position from which to proclaim "Good News" and reconciliation. The Good News and the words and acts of proclamation are now free in the world and take new forms, few of which the Church seems capable of handling.

From a second point of view, that of modern industrial society, a "mediator" is the agent of compromise in a world of extreme and opposite positions. To management and labor alike, it is the mediator in a dispute who makes it possible for them to find a compromise solution and return to their tasks. At this point it is imperative to note that the mediator seldom brings his own ideas and feelings into the negotiation and settlement of disputes. The materials, ideas, positions, and opinions he works with are those of the opposite sides who employ his skills and position to reach agreement. The mediator is a trader exchanging one point of one side for another point on the other. He is a clarifier of ideas and opinions, re-speaking the words of one side for the benefit of the other. The mediator attempts to maintain a neutrality that is capable of hearing and seeing both sides and examining them to a fine degree not possible for those who hold those sides subjectively. The mediator's goal is a compromise, a

solution to temporal problems. This is not just a role appearing during crisis periods. The mediator functions continually to solve difficulties before they become major disputes, to pave the way for continued smooth communications. In his most fundamental role, he allows two or more sides, each with its own integrity and reasons for separateness to maintain relationship. In industrial business language, the mediator is the equivalent of the one who brings "reconciliation".

For the churchman, "reconciliation" is a familiar term, but one in which precise definitions and associations are absent. It is a vague ideal that provokes a positive response, but provides little clear direction. Christ was, historically, and is, theologically, the reconciler. In a world of separateness, excessive independence, isolation, and little, poor, or no communication, the church has the tradition of overcoming isolation among men. It is this role that can guide the church's work with cable television. The new communications possibilities offered by cable are distinctively atune to the tasks and possibilities of reconciliation which is the peculiar orientation of the church. The need for sharing of ideas and positions, the clarification of needs and goals, the bringing together of people to work on common ideas and problems, these are all goals of reconciliation and possibilities of cable. These and other specific models are the subject of chapters four

and five.

The Illuminative Norm

As an ethical christology, Gustafson's "norm" is essentially a compromise employing both traditional theological concepts and pragmatic application of working values in contemporary life. It is as if he set down the "realities" of Christ and the implications inherent in those realities, and then backed off the logical consequences of those realities, offering his readers an easier way out. But it is Gustafson's themes that are of real value to the local church in its search for new models.

For Gustafson, Jesus Christ represents the origin of a continuing community--the church--whose primary characteristics and mode of being are trust and loyalty, in Jesus Christ. The church's expression of trust and loyalty in a continuing witness to what God has done for man in Christ represents a perspective and a posture by which it faces and responds to the world. Trust and loyalty are the key elements of style in which the Church operates. They are the compass points by which the Church maintains orientation and faithfulness to God. These same two compass points are paralleled in hope and freedom which Gustafson calls the disposition of the "moral self". It is hope and freedom that are the dispositions of the church as it seeks models for its life in the world. It is the attitude

of hope between men that is the acting out of the church's trust in God. It is the attitude of freedom as the carrier and mover of hope which is the expression of the church's loyalty to the one source of its self-understanding, God in Christ.

As elements of model-building for the local Church, hope and freedom become the signposts of the church at work. Both themes are contemporary and widely used. Yet perhaps it is the Church which can uniquely display these themes in institutional and structural form. The Church's tradition of trust and loyalty as informing these themes give the Church enormous resources of understanding and witnessing to them. In a world that talks much of hope and freedom, there is still a great need for structures which embody those values in their own life and work. Again, the Church may witness to these values by its embodiment of them. In such witness the Church teaches hope and freedom as elements of man's best interests and activity. The Church could be the agent of preserving and illuminating those values for modern man.

If hope and freedom are the attitudes by which man views his own present and future, then it is the Church as historical witness that best informs Western man of what such values have done in the past. As historical model for these values, the Church is unique. It is the task of current theology to provide the teaching of these values in

such manner as will assist man's appropriation of them in his individual life. And there is no better teaching than example.

Gustafson acknowledges that the Church provides interpretation of antecedents and consequences of actions based on historical events. From its particular set of values, the Church assesses events and the world as man is in it. And as one of many social institutions, the Church claims man's attention as interpreter of life and as source of meaning for it. Gustafson says that in this sense, the Church "competes" for man's loyalty as one among many. Indeed, for Christians, the Church is the most important norm for guidance and illumination.

In building models which employ Gustafson's norm theory, the churchman can immediately identify with the problems of conflicting norms or conflicting systems of allegiance. After all, he is living in a time when uniform, all-inclusive ideals and institutions are passing out of existence and pluralism defines his world. There are groups advocating an almost infinite list of values and directions. The number of views on any single subject seem endless. The formal and informal organizations to which a person may belong or seek information from is specific for any possible subject! What the churchman seeks is the value references by which he makes judgements on options available to him. What the Church offers is a

historical community which has held certain values in its movement through history and has antecedent knowledge and application of those values.

What Gustafson has offered is a value orientation which is a part of the church's tradition and is thus tested and about which we have a kind of data bank concerning applications and consequences. It is, likewise, an orientation which offers a solid place to stand in a world of competing allegiances. Finally, it is a value reference set in which the present population of the world has immediate interest and seeks our experience and witness for determining its responses.

Hope and freedom is the value set by which models can be built for the present and future. Cable television, as one emerging element of the future and communications, is a kind of workshop for those values. Chapters four and five will examine the application of hope and freedom guidelines for the church's work with cable television. Specifically, the church holds these values above all others as it will work to make cable a servant of people's needs. Models employing these values can be useful to the Church and the nation in developing cable as an integral part of man's future.

The Representative

It is Soelle who represents the most contemporary

kind of christological work. Soelle has re-examined one of the oldest titles of Christ and has done so with faithfulness to the New Testament tradition and with a keen sense of present need. The task of doing theology in light of present and future need is well demonstrated here. Soelle begins from much the same points that Brunner used to derive his christology of the "mediator". The representative bears many similarities to the mediator, but reaches its fullest meanings as the reader recognizes present reality within the context established by Soelle.

The interchangeable and provisional nature of man's life is self evident. The same pluralism of conflicting norms and allegiances which Gustafson recognizes is but the other side of the coin from Soelle's recognition of man's provisionality and search for identity. Soelle proposes that man is capable of being represented--before God and before other men. When man is represented before God, it is Jesus Christ who represents him. This is the same role which Brunner calls the mediator which Christ mediates between God and man.

Man and God, according to Soelle, need time to form identity. That time is purchased for them by the representative who stands in their place, holding open potential and power, until they can be claimed (by man) (for man). Because the representative is temporary and provisional, he is dependent. That is, he shares with the

one he represents hope and freedom for the present and future. Those represented and the representative are dependent upon one another. The representative holds open a place for others in the midst of an increasingly pluralistic world. As conflicting norms and options for present and future allegiance appear, the representative provides time and space for a new identity to be shaped.

For the Church to act as representative in new models of structure and work, it must recognize first its own tradition and the values inherent in its history. If, as Gustafson suggests, hope and freedom represent the proper attitudes of the church in the world, then it is hope and freedom that define the representative role of the Church. It is hope and freedom that the representative brings to his role on behalf of others. It is these values that illuminate his "holding action" on behalf of those who are not present, either because they have no identity or because their identity has no power to be heard and dealt with.

In chapter two, I presented the view that cable television represented an unprecedented change in communications and in man's ability to share meaning (eg--identity). In an age of pluralism, access to communications media represents the possibility of identity for those with meanings to share. Guaranteeing access, therefore, becomes a critical function of those who wish to hold open the

future for new identity and who wish to maintain a posture of hope and freedom towards that future. It is the representative understanding of the Church that may be able to guarantee access and a future to those who have no access to communications and who have no clear identity in the future.

The above problem of access is particularly that of the cable television industry. A wide access at low cost is precisely what a pluralistic society needs if it is to honor its pluralism and hope and freedom in it. But traditional structures and systems of power threaten the possibilities of wide access and those without identity do not have the power to work for and guarantee such access. The Church has identity through tradition and values, and it has power to say that access will be guaranteed those who have no power or identity.

Inasmuch as the Church also represents the world before God, according to Soelle, the Church can choose to believe that the world is worthy of representation in all of its pluralism. In guaranteeing that new identities may be heard and that the future is open to those who presently have no identity, the Church witnesses to its belief that God has worked in history and continues to do so, even in ways foreign and seemingly antithetical to the Church's own self-understanding. Therefore, it is the Church's position that it does not have a yardstick by which it

determines which potential identities may live or die.

Rather, it holds open the future in a posture of hope and in the belief that God acts in men and in their world. It recognizes that freedom is an essential element of a new identity over which it may not exercise final and absolute judgement.

The Church does believe and act in those times and places in which hope and freedom are offered to men. In circumstances wherein hope is not present, the Church may be the agent and bearer of hope. Where freedom is lacking, the Church may speak only in behalf of change and a future where freedom is present. In representing those who are not present, the Church is only able to speak and act on behalf of possibilities of hope and freedom. It may not do otherwise.

CHAPTER IV

THE LOCAL CHURCH AND CABLE

"What we have here is an insurmountable opportunity."
- Pogo

In dealing with a new and unique program possibility within the local Church, it is essential to first consider the internal order and resources that the local Church may bring to bear on the new program. Here it will be necessary to introduce broad considerations of the Church and not be confined to the specifics of any one denominational pattern of organization. The particular way in which a Church orders its life for decision-making and program-planning certainly affects new program possibilities. But denominational ecclesiology is largely a subject for in-house administration and its accompanying bureaucrats. In most cases, visionary ideas for new programs have not come from administrative activity, but from individuals who perhaps work within that structure. In any case, this paper concedes that the art of implementing a new program through existing structures and order in the local church may well be as creative a task as the production of a new vision itself. This paper confines itself to the broad outlines of a new vision concerning cable television and the local Church.

Discussions and design of a program for work with cable television should consider a number of alternatives in which a local Church could be affected and in which its work could be effective. It is possible that one, several, or all of these may simultaneously become part of the Church's on-going work with cable. It is most critical that these areas all be considered, individually, and in detail, lest the local Church find itself involved in multiple programming efforts with conflicting aims. These alternatives will be briefly listed and described, and all will be dealt with in detail later in this chapter.

First, local Church discussions could center on what the Church is as an institution within the community. This should include both a theological definition involving such categories as ministries, membership, and staff, and it should include a task-function study which compares the Church's organization, resources, and goals with other community agencies.

Second, as a related function to the first area, the Church should do an extensive listing and evaluation of its resources, particularly its membership and their individual skills and knowledge. The survey would be particularly useful if trained personnel and management people within the Church's membership could donate their skills.

Third, again with the aid of skilled personnel from the Church's membership, a study should be made of

the local community itself. This study, and the previous mentioned ones, form a very basic type of community development and structural analysis task. They are specified here because they are essential to the success of any institution which is considering the development of a significant community-related program. Obviously, this kind of research and preparation has not often been a part of most local Church programming, but it is listed here to emphasize its importance in working with a community. Such studies are a matter of course for most organizations with a serious management structure and a large resource of personnel. Surely the Church's self-understanding and congregational resources require that it consider itself a serious organization within the community and appropriately prepare itself.

The above three areas of study can be grouped together and considered as basic preparation for any kind of new program that the Church may consider. The remaining two areas of study concern cable television specifically. Fourth, the local Church, in whatever manner its organizational rules require, should establish a cable study commission. The primary concern of this committee must be the possible uses of cable television for Church in-house program uses such as teacher-training, televised services, meetings, etc. The function is essential not because this is the most important use Churches can make of cable tele-

vision, but because it is the kind of usage which may not benefit either the Church or the community and the Church must be intimately aware of this. It is a good practice to study what not to do as well as what to do. This is not to imply that the Church cannot make use of cable television, within national and local regulation, for its own agenda. The temptation is to ask what can CATV do for us and our programs and not what can CATV mean (as ministry) to and within our local community.

The questions of proper and improper usage of cable television are tied to the technology of cable tv and of lay and clerical understanding of it. This chapter argues that cable television should not be viewed as an instrument to perpetuate the current Church programs or to assist the Church with in-house maintenance tasks such as membership drives or financial campaigns. Such tasks are possible uses of cable, but they are nothing more than exploitative of the community for which cable is a new communications resource and of the Church's constituency who could be involved in needed ministries with cable's potential services.

Fifth, an appointed task force within the Church should be charged with researching both the nature of cable television and the possible uses to which CATV may be put in the community. At the very least, this task force should actively employ the services of both Church

members and non-members with expertise and ideas in the community. It should consider the use of public hearings within the Church and community as a means of gathering ideas for uses of cable tv. It may appear too large a burden to ask a single committee to research both the nature and uses of cable, and also study programs within the Church and community that could employ this new technology. In fact, separate committees would likely filter possible ideas and uses in order to reach a lower common denominator that could be easily explained to the other and to the Church congregation and community. By doing both tasks simultaneously and in the same committee, technological possibility generates responses and new tasks for cable to perform. It is to be expected that a committee charged with both tasks will require considerably longer to complete its job.

It may be the case that the task force described in the above paragraph would be more useful if it organized itself as a permanent and on-going forum for ideas and discussions about cable. It could thereby provide evaluation and impetus for change and additional programming for a cable system actually in operation.

Obviously, there are other areas for study and even different ways of approaching this chapter's subject. The above structure has been suggested because the five elements listed are important in themselves as guidelines. In

addition, the structure is intended to suggest new approaches for the Church to consider in planning all of its local ministry and program. Cable television is simply one area of concern and will serve as a model for handling other problems.

The present state of the cable industry is such that there will be little consistency in cable systems from one community to another. Many communities have had cable systems for years while others have little or no knowledge that such a communications medium exists even though CATV will probably cover the nation by 1985. In addition, many hundreds of communities either have cable systems with limited technical capabilities and even more limited programming resources. Still other communities are presently facing the difficult problems involved with designing and granting a franchise for a cable system in their community.

The Church is not in the position of being a total, all-encompassing resource agency to handle cable problems. Yet, its base in every community of any size throughout the nation virtually guarantees a wide-scale exposure to the present and future of cable. Soon the Churches' experiences with cable systems will be of sufficient scope to provide a valuable resource for all communities. This chapter examines the Church's basic value orientations and common bases in communities which will help establish some

useful approaches to the problems and possibilities of cable tv. Such approaches will be of value precisely because they ask questions and raise issues that are not being asked by other agencies. A well-designed conceptualization of cable's role in a community will be useful whether or not the system has already been constructed, or its capabilities severely limited, or if the Church and community only want to conduct an evaluation of programming in their community.

THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY INSTITUTION

Since the early 60's, the local Church has been the focus of much discontent and confusion. For the social change liberal, the Church was often at the fore of such critical issues as racism, the draft, welfare reform, etc. But such leadership was inconsistent and usually accompanied by large-scale strife and divisions within the Church. To the more conservative constituency it was clear that neither the Church leadership nor rank-and-file had clear mandates for social action. More important, there was a clear lack of direct reliance upon the Church's historical resources as elements for assisting the current decision-making processes.

To those "outside" of the Church, either by non-membership or by emotional and spiritual choices, there was keen disappointment that the Church did not offer stronger

and more prophetic action and leadership. In addition, these people witnessed the steady decline of membership, and budget, in the more liberal Churches, and the rapid increase in the fundamental and evangelical sects. Overwhelmingly, this shift to the more conservative Churches was interpreted by activists and minorities as a wholesale reluctance by churchmen to face up to and engage in significant social change movements. This perception by the community was quickly cycled back to churchmen adding more pain and confusion to questions that were beginning to stack up and fester under the skin of congregational unity.

This is only the most recent occurrence of serious questioning of self-image within the Church. The increasing lack of clarity about its role and mission has provided the Church with an overflow of articles, books, television shows, speeches, and annual reports all indicating that the traditional Church was in severe trouble, financially and emotionally. Alternatives to the institutional community Church were suggested, including the "house church", neo-monastic life styles for churchmen, and task-oriented communal Churches centered on a common life and common task. For the most part, however, the local Church has continued to function in the community, although close observers would have little difficulty detecting a serious crippling in spirit and vision.

The 60's also introduced serious management studies and training for Church leadership and seminarians. Management concepts such as systems analysis, organizational development, and consultant services were offered, and sometimes thrown at, churchmen as tools for re-vitalizing and re-directing the local Church. On a personal level, career development agencies and programs noted a sharp rise in clergy and ex-clergy who were seeking new careers outside of the local Church but wanted to use pastoral skills and maintain the kind of intimate personal contacts that the local Church offered. In short, it was apparent to most observers that while personnel resources in the local Church were strong, organizational and administrative structures were failing and uncertain, at least as far as they served to re-orient Church membership to a changing society outside of the Church.

To put the circumstances in the most direct light, a serious attempt to bring improved management and tighter organizational development to the local Church can be key factors in advocating any new program for the Churches. Since key assets which the local Church could potentially bring to a community-based program with cable television are large and available facilities for meetings, program-taping, research, and television studios, good management practice is an essential factor in developing the Church's program with CATV. Indeed a visionary within the public

access arena of cable television may view the local Churches' physical and geographical base in the community as the most valuable and accessible means of extending CATV's potential to all members of the community.

More importantly, introduction of modern management techniques and structures would help the Church's own self-understanding in all areas of its life and work. Quadrennial Study Commissions and other re-structuring task groups within the larger Church cannot possibly account for either the particular situation of any local Church or for the sense of, and sensitivity to, needed structure of mission within any community. It is therefore necessary that each local congregation have a strong awareness and specific knowledge of its own capabilities and self-perception. Guidelines in the Discipline or Book of Orders simply do not provide specific goals within the institutional capabilities of the local community. A strong congregation and resulting active ministry will be better guaranteed by an active on-going process of self-evaluation and decision-making by Church membership. My own experience suggests that such a new orientation and value system will be very threatening to traditional lines of authority and administration. The clergyman will need to employ a deep sensitivity and commitment to change in order to assist the congregation in taking control of the resources and program of the local Church.

It will be most useful to illustrate the nature of organizational development tasks as they might occur within a local Church.

Let us suppose that a local Church has decided not to assume its presence and membership as a given, but rather as resources with a supporting tradition to bear witness to. Several elements of that tradition should be recalled and studied. The first is that the Church "of Jesus Christ" came into being after the life and death of the one called Christ. Since his death, that Church has been a part of historical evolution and change as has every other institution. Hence, Christ "founded" the Church only in a theological sense as witnessed to by the disciples. In fact, the disciples and subsequent followers of the life and death of Christ established the Church as an institution to continue the sharing of the story of Christ and to bear witness to the acts and Word which were attributed to Christ during his ministry on earth. The Church, therefore, should bear witness to Christ and His Word. This may seem elementary, but for many churchgoers, it is unknown and ~~unrealized~~ because it is unspoken.

To bear witness to Christ, the Church must discover and re-discover that Word for which Christ was a witness. Hence Biblical study and Church history are important to the Church's self-understanding.

Second, the Church has changed throughout its history and that change should be a part of the local Church's study of its tradition and history. Hence, it would be most important if the members of the local United Methodist Church could view themselves as an institution in direct continuity with the Protestant Reformation and beyond that, the Roman Catholic Church. Likewise, this would be an appropriate time to stress the wholeness of the Christian Church as a modern ecumenicity would warrant. The contemporary purpose of this for organizational development is to stress the legitimacy of new forms and functions for the local Church. Too often local Church members view the essential witnessing role of the Church as a static one--requiring maintenance of traditional forms and functions in order to bear witness to history.

Third, local churchpeople could come to understand that the Word which the Church speaks and witnesses to is integrally related to the ability of the local Church to change and adapt to new situations. The eternal Word does not absolutely require the use of eternal institutions and concepts of witness and communication. More importantly, it is the eternal quality of the Word that allows it to appear in new times and in new forms. If we trust that this is so, then we should not be afraid to experiment with new forms and new ways in which to witness and share that Word.

In summary, three elements of tradition are essential factors of a Church's self-evaluation: The Church exists to bear witness to the Word which was in Christ; The Church has, in all its diversity, continually changed its structure and form as have all other institutions; The eternal quality of the Word is integrally related to the ability of the Church to make new forms and ways for witnessing.

In light of these historical elements, the local Church must consider its goals and organizational structure. This is not the place to consider the ministries of the Church, but actually how it is constructed to do ministry. Some questions are in order here.

Who "does ministry" in a local Church? NO broad theological positions are accepted here--not who is supposed to, but who DOES? Is it the paid and ordained staff that "does ministry"? or is it the non-ordained staff that is in greatest contact with the members of the congregation and community? Do members of the congregation actively participate in ministries of the Church? This is not to be confused with organizational activities of the Church. Certainly a major responsibility of clergy and lay leadership is to assure the cultivation and nurture of a Christian community within the Church's membership. But the development of such an in-house program of sustenance and growth should not be the sole end in itself--IF the

Church is to be considered as an institutional entity within the community. No present institution of any viability and life exists solely unto itself. It exists for interchange and mutual benefit for all elements of the society and community.

To what extent is the staff of a Church involved in in-house maintenance and to what degree is it involved in teaching and developing ministries by its congregation to the community at large? And in all these dimensions, what does the congregation and staff believe about its role and their individual roles?

The limits of this inquiry are such that only the significant questions can be raised. No definitive answers are possible, both because they are unique to each situation and because they would require exhaustive research. One area does seem clear. The local Church is in critical need of a current theological definition of itself as one unique community among other unique communities in a society. What sets it apart as an institutional structure with specific tasks, life, and goals? Again, it will not be sufficient here to appeal to broad theological definitions. The local congregation needs specific interpretations which can be both conceptualized and actualized within its own life.

The uniqueness of a local Church in a community is a question which may be best approached by comparison with

other organizations in the community. Such comparisons may be done in categories of voluntary vs. non-voluntary agencies, profit vs. non-profit, services vs. product orientation, to name only a few organizational tasks. In a similar manner, the Church could examine its resources in comparison with those of other institutions in the community. For example, a supermarket would generally be considered non-voluntary, profit-making, product distributing, and dependent upon finances and professional employees and staff as resources. By comparison, the Church is considered voluntary, non-profit (not prophet), services distributing (Gospel as product?), and rely on membership, their contributions, and a traditional status or role as resources. The latter is particularly important because it appears to be an assumption made by both the Church and its members. It may not, however, be a conscious assumption much less an examined and well-defined one. Resources of the Church will be examined more closely in the following section.

The questions of services or product may help Church members re-examine their role in both historical and contemporary situations. In economic terminology the Gospel is the Church's "product" and the work of the Church in witness to that Gospel is its "service". Church members more familiar with business than ecclesiology may use this typology to examine the Church's "distribution" of services

and investment-to-return ratios, to name only one comparison. The study of institutional goals also offers fruitful comparisons between the local Church and business. Business and management professionals are long familiar with processes of goal-setting, resource development towards that goal, and re-adjustment periods which negotiate new paths towards the goal or even change the goal. Certainly most Churches have had some sort of similar process in year-end or charge conferences. This process needs to be expanded and developed with the aid of modern organizers. And it must incorporate the best minds that the Church has to offer to itself and society as a whole.

Much, much more could be said about goal-setting and other management techniques and their use in the local Church. It is sufficient here to have indicated some of the dimensions of the task.

THE CHURCH AND ITS RESOURCES

The organizational study mentioned above pointed out the need for close examination of the resources of, or available to, the local Church. This section is devoted mostly to the resources of people, finances, and facilities. But first it will be useful to raise again the question of the Church's tradition and the Word to which it is a witness. Spiritually, the Word and the history of witness in the New Testament through all of Church history has always

been treated as a resource. We refer to the "spiritual resources" of the Bible, the Church Fathers, and the very presence of the witnessing community.

Specifically, the Church regards its theology as a resource which gives both motive and direction to Church action. In the most direct and vital sense, the Church's theology is its most active resource. It has been the intent of this paper to suggest that several christological models can be of value in helping the Church formulate self-understanding and action regarding cable television. The detail of those particular models appeared in chapter two. A specific application of that resource appears later on in this chapter.

The Church's resources of personnel are literally inexhaustible, not being limited to Church membership rolls. Every local Church has access via individual contact or group program to a wide variety of skills and talents within the community. On the subject of self-evaluation and goal-setting, there is most certainly a skilled management person in any congregation. The chances are good that he has seldom been asked to use his managerial and administrative skills in the life of the Church. Top-line business management or a management consultant will be of immediate value in preparing the local Church for new programs, or in performing precisely this kind of personnel inventory in the Church's membership and friends.

As an illustration of the kinds of human resources available to a creative local Church, some suggestions concerning an inquiry into cable television are in order. Engineers and technicians could provide Church and community with a clear, yet detailed, entrance into the world of CATV. They could moderate the discussions on what is and is not possible with emerging technology and they can help the congregation understand the critical questions about privacy and control. Church members in government and community organizations could lend their expertise to considerations of what cable can mean to low income communities and those areas of the city which lack both internal communication links and a strong social cohesiveness as a result. Bankers and financially knowledgeable persons would be a key asset in the considerations of both constructing a cable system and in evaluating its economic impact on the community. Many cable systems fall short of their potential for community development because of a lack of solid financial planning involving the entire community and particularly those neighborhoods which could benefit most from its installation.

Obviously the kinds of tasks described above are being performed in some manner for each cable system being built or operated. What should be of real interest to the Church is the benefit of an open community-oriented perspective on cable which it could facilitate. Often, the

significant questions regarding human value and future human possibility are never raised by those people responsible for planning the beginning of a cable system in a community. The long-range effect of cable and its potential for improving people's lives in very specific ways is tremendous. Questions of goals and value in human communications cannot be taken for granted. The three models for use by a local Church described earlier are ones in which key questions of value can be raised but openness to widespread opinions is still possible. The Church's own unique traditions and values are also important contributions to planning for cable. Church members should not be reluctant to contribute these values to discussions of CATV and community and human development.

It would be interesting for a local Church to present its membership with a well-defined plan for community development of CATV and then ask for an inventory of skills and experience which Church members could contribute to community implementation of the program. Other than general titles about occupation, most Churches have little idea of what members actually do professionally or as an avocation. Certainly there is a high degree of one-to-one knowledge about individuals, but the need is for a central skill and resource bank which could be tapped for specific needs in the local community. Once members with needed skills have been identified, the Church should consider

involving them in some kind of regular learning experience studying tradition and teachings of the Church. The differences between awareness of tradition and indoctrination of beliefs are substantial and should never be confused. A sensitive layman serving on a city CATV commission could make a world of difference in the system's usefulness to poor, uneducated, and out-of-contact citizens of the community.

The local Church has another kind of resource already referred to above, that of a geographical location and facilities in the community. As one speaker put it, "...the church is guilty of a kind of overkill in physical plant. It is fairly common to see two or three churches on adjacent corners of an intersection, all with substantial resources in buildings and land." One of the more creative remnants of the ecumenical movement of the 1960's is that some local Churches have overcome theological and denominational differences and have joined together in a single set of buildings. But even such creative responses to dwindling membership and finances will not create a severe shortage of church buildings! One of the many uses to which such facilities could be put, at a minimum income for the local Church, is for cable television offices and studios for the community access programs. This is not an offer to cable companies to rent cheap space at unused church buildings. It is a suggestion that Churches could open their

facilities to people in the community who want to use cable television to work at local problems.

There is a distinct advantage in using local Church buildings that serve both the interests of the community and of the cable developers. The essence of cable tv's potential for changing the way people communicate is in its ability to represent a large number and diversity of human opinion and organization. In a time of increasing pluralism in this country and recognition of such a value as a predominant element of the future, we must continually be aware of developments in thought and technology that will allow a pluralistic society to grow and mature. We are familiar with the centralization of much of our communications media, as demonstrated by the television and radio "networks", large newspaper chains, and court actions breaking up centralized ownership of cable, broadcast, and publishing interests.

The Church can take an active part in fostering the growth of pluralism in American society by making available its resources of values and facilities in every community. Emerging pluralism needs time and room to establish itself as an important avenue for new ideas, people, and change. As set forth in the previous chapter, it is the Church which has the traditions of fostering, protecting, and even cultivating new forms of human growth, life, and expression. If pluralism is indeed the dominant shape of

cultural and political expression in the immediate present going into the future, then the Church may well take its place as an institution whose values traditionally give support to new human activity.

Specifically, the use of facilities and convenient location in cities and neighborhoods means that the Church will be exposed to people, ideas, social and political movements that it may not normally be accustomed to working with. Such contact cannot but help to prove beneficial for the Church which seeks to understand the new world into which it daily flounders and in which there is a crying need for its record and experience of human history. It is a toss-up as to who will benefit most from the combining of resources and programs. The Church gains in knowledge and access to the world and the world gains in values put forth for reflection by churchpeople. It should give church stewards some satisfaction that such an exciting program now makes use of church classrooms, social halls, and offices.

THE CHURCH AND RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY

The task under consideration here is one that creative Church leaders have recognized in recent years as being of vital import for any local Church. Urban training organizations such as COMMIT in Los Angeles have been working with clergy and laymen since 1966 to develop sophisti-

cated methods of community analysis and study. Many of their methods are relatively simple and have been scaled down to manageable tasks for trained and untrained laity, alike.

Theologically, community analysis can be viewed as a means for the Church to discover "what's happening in God's world." It is a process of discovery and, therein, affirmation that God is alive and at work among people. The Church already has a Biblical mandate to be a presence in the world, witnessing to the act of God in redeeming the world through the life and work of Jesus Christ. It has largely chosen to witness to that presence and that historical act by preaching or delivery "to" the world "from" the Church. Part of what is now at stake for the Church's future as a viable agent of change and human reconciliation is its ability to hear and see what God is doing in the world outside of the Church.

What the Church does bring to the role of observer in human life and society is a historical consciousness of God's movement among men in all times and in all places. This consciousness may provide interpretation and meaning to those people outside of the Church. It is not to be imposed on the world by the Church, but offered as one institution's and tradition's attempt to give meaning to experience. But being careful not to impose one's viewpoint on others does not mean that the Church is not an

active and creative advocate and believer in its tradition and interpretation of life.

As one social agent among others in a community, the local Church in effect needs community analysis to determine how best to place its message and ideas before the community. The analogy of a retail store is not inappropriate. To determine the probable success of a sales campaign or new product, it is important to determine the potential market and what kind of approach might be most effective. If a service is being contemplated, community analysis may help determine whether or not the service is needed, where it might be needed or used, and even what may generate a demand or market for the service.

In a matter more specifically-related, community analysis for a voluntary service-oriented "mission-minded" agency such as the local Red Cross, Salvation Army or the local Church consists of locating and defining existing needs. Such "mission" agencies to a large extent have great awareness of problems such as vagrancy, low-income neighborhoods without effective organizational voice, unemployment, inferior education, poor community services, to name only a few. Organizational or community analysis will assist these groups in the definitions of specific cause or source of problems, shifting trends, probable future directions, and variety of possible solutions.

The local Church can use community analysis as a means of determining the precise and most effective placement of mission dollars and manpower. Ministries can be defined and re-created or first created on the basis of specific need. Many local Churches and support agencies and commissions for the local Church have helped to define this task in a manner which is quickly and easily integrated into local programs. In the Los Angeles area, Churches which are members of the regional Urban Training Network through COMMIT have approached the job of community analysis by posing the question "What's happening in God's World?". The basic orientation is to proclaim that God is, of course, alive and in the world, and that it is part of the business of the Church to see, hear, and know what man and society are doing.

To ask "What's happening in God's World?" is for the churchman to ask where do we see the movement of God's work and Word in present time, and, what is man doing in the world--either as a conscious response to God or as man's own vocation without a knowing or acknowledged assent to God's presence. These distinctions are critical for churchmen. Community analysis presupposes that those performing the analysis are interested in the community's goals and self-understanding and are seeking to understand that particular community as it understands itself. Therefore, churchmen working to analyze a community cannot pre-

suppose that either conscious or unconscious motives of Christian values underlie the work and goals of the world. They simply may not blindly believe that the world understands and follows the presence of God in the world or that they have the right or obligation to superimpose Christian goals and behaviour on the acts and words of the world. To do so is to engage in a kind of theological imperialism of which the Christian Church has already been guilty in past history.

What churchmen may do is to honestly and fairly perceive what in fact is taking place in the world and define that according to private beliefs which remain just that--private. Yet these beliefs are a testimony of faith to which they may publicly witness and may test against continued experience. The testing against continued experience is very important as the Church may understand that God is in fact present and moving in new forms, new ways, and even on to new goals in new times.

As churchmen, our problem has often been that we are unable to honestly and accurately perceive what is happening in the world and we too often seek to communicate or minister to a perception of the world that is in fact false. Thus, community analysis is important if a true Word is to be spoken and an honest and true interpretation of the world according to Christian belief is to take place. One further analogy will suffice: The Church has

always placed at its center its claim of authority to interpret Scripture and of the proper means to do so. The denominational fractionalism is largely the result of disagreement over this very problem. Yet too often the Church has never taken seriously the need to give the same kind of importance and attention to the means and process by which it observes and interprets the world outside of the Church. It is only in comparatively recent years that the Church has given public support to scholarly analysis of the world which existed at the time Jesus is recorded to have lived and witnessed. To do so has meant that much of the unconscious and conscious assumptions about Jesus' ministry have been challenged and gradually changed by the evidence of historical analysis from fields of study outside of more traditional Church interests. This re-defining of the historical process of Scriptural interpretation parallels the kind of re-definition now required for ministry in the local Churches.

What, in particular, does this community analysis look like and what kinds of tasks should the Church first perform to prepare to accomplish it?

First, the churchpersons doing such an analysis must "enter" the world with as much objectivity to fact as possible and with as much subjective consciousness as will allow them to make clear value judgements wherein they know upon what values they have based their judgements. One of

those values presumably is that of Christian understanding of man, God, and history.

Second, it will be most effective if churchpeople "enter" the world on the world's terms and are prepared to listen, watch, and participate in the patterns and movement of the world outside of the Church.

Third, churchpeople will have to come to grips with the conflict between the individual and the institution in American society. They can be neither overly impressed by institutional power and wealth or be overly sentimental about individual powerlessness and isolation.

Fourth, churchpeople will have to learn to ask the questions which are specific in providing information about the community and people in it. Part of this task can be directed by training and orientation in the areas of organizational management, political action and power, social change, cultural identities, to name only a few.

Fifth, in many respects, the world will set the proper agenda and assign the correct priorities to the report that the churchpersons make back to the Church. The observers and analysts of the community will need to be sensitive to the feelings and goals of the local members of the community and reflect them fairly in their reporting.

School Board / Tax Override Elections - Example.

The actual task of community analysis then occurs in the

answers and interpretation of the following kinds of questions:

1. Do an economic and racial profile of your community. Visit the local governmental and social offices and consult the census to locate lower, middle, and upper economic income neighborhoods in your community. Correlate this data with information on racial makeup of the community.

2. Consult recent voter registration lists and election records to determine voter turnouts, votes on specific issues such as tax elections for schools, busing, annexation, etc. Note the general platform and philosophy of successful candidates in the elections.

3. Consult the census for length of residency and size of family figures in the neighborhood. Correlate these with the above categories to give a picture of the stability or instability of a community.

4. Likewise consult real estate offices and records for sales patterns and rental turnover in various neighborhoods.

5. Contact the Chamber of Commerce and study newspaper files for a list of both formal and informal organizations in the local neighborhoods. Check election-time advertising for theme-oriented and issue-oriented campaign groups (eg--citizens against busing).

6. Review the membership records of your own church to determine the same kinds of information about the congregation--its income, residential area, voting interests, occupation, family size, etc. Does it represent the local community around the Church? From what parts of the community does your membership come?

7. If time and finances permit, conduct a simple poll in the congregation concerning specifics such as occupation, views on particular subjects, voting record (eg--Did you vote in the last election? What other voluntary organizations do you belong to?)

8. Go to places and talk with people that you have not gone to or talked with before. Go to a corner bar, a park, or a club meeting and watch and listen to people as individuals and as groups to which you do not belong or have never come in contact with.

9. Go on a walking or bike-riding tour of the community to see it at ground level, block-by-block. Go places you have never been to before.

The above are a very few examples for conducting a community analysis to determine what the "local world" is around the Church. Concerning the particular subject of cable tv and the life of the Church, analysis of such collected data could be shaped along the following lines:

1. Around what kinds of issues, problems, or ideas did the community get together or organize itself? Who

were the leaders and where did they come from? What kind of organization was it, how long did it take to come into being and how long did it last?

2. Was there a wide diversity in opinions and views of a particular issue? For example, did people see school busing as a national trend or as a particular act of the local board, or even specific members of the local school board?

3. What kind of activities did people choose to express themselves on current events? Consider letters to the editor, radio talk-shows, protest rallies, coffee hour campaigns, public and private letters, individual communications?

4. Was the community or were particular groups successful in communicating their message or reaching their goal? What was the reaction to defeat, or success?

5. If a cable system already exists, what use did these groups or did individuals make of it? Was it effective? How did the cable operator handle the requests for time and programs?

6. What action could have improved communications and provided clarity concerning the election issues? What ideas did not get a good or fair hearing? What omissions' or mis-communications took place?

7. Were there groups or individuals which attempted to gain better communications or more hearings of all

positions and ideas? Did such groups as the League of Women Voters perform an effective role in helping inform the public of the election and candidates and issues involved? What other clarifying and assisting functions were needed?

It is these kinds of tasks which must be completed before the Church can respond either effectively or coherently to any public situation. And response is only possible when the Church's own self-understanding also has clarity and is adhered to in its action and speaking with the world.

Several elements of such self-understanding were presented in chapter three. These consisted of particular roles identified in Christological form throughout the Church's life. It is not necessary that the roles be articulated for the benefit of the public. It is entirely necessary that spokesmen for the Church or persons acting out of a Christian consciousness mediated and supported by the Church, be guided by these or similar role models. It is the opinion of this writer that the roles defined earlier are ones which will be the most beneficial to a community's development of cable and which will also be most consistent and supportive of the Church's own self-understanding.

These three roles are integrated into the following discussions of Cable Television and the local Church.

CABLE TELEVISION AND CHURCH USAGE

This section of the chapter is devoted to examining what, in the opinion of this writer, the local Church should not do in regard to cable. Curiously enough, the "not" is not an absolute and hard "not", but a defensive one intended to guarantee that the local Church will consider a wider use and relationship to cable than it might otherwise have done.

This section is also a demonstration of the belief that sometimes the best defense is a good offense and that by presenting in as great detail as possible Church uses of cable for doing Church functions, we may be best prepared to guard against the over- or mis-use of these functions. It is entirely possible that some of the Church uses of cable should in fact be considered and used on a local cable system. Cable is open to all community groups, including the local Churches. But such use should occur only after churchpeople have carefully considered the potential of the system and the real effectiveness and creativity of a local Church program via cable. It is the belief of this writer that, too often, the local Church considers the matter of its own life and program first and then has little attention and effort remaining to consider the life and work of those outside of the Church in "God's world". This paper specifically advocates that church-
~~people use cable only on behalf of the community and world~~

outside of the Church, but should do so along internal guidelines developed in its own tradition and theology.

Two categories will be helpful in looking at local Church uses of cable. First, cable may be used to perform Church maintenance and in-house functions such as fund-raising, membership education, special promotions, and leadership training. Second, the Church could use cable to help perform some of its mission or ministries within the local Church, such as preaching or worship services, shut-in ministries, educational programs, teacher-training, missions education, social concerns education, to name only a few. While both categories are distinctly programs of and relating to the local Church, the latter tend to be more extroverted or mission-to-the-world oriented. They do not, however, fall into the category of non-church uses of cable to be examined in the final section of this chapter.

Church Maintenance

Advocates of the cable revolution have long been in somewhat cautious support of the particular aspect of cable tv which allows individuals to extend their private environment into the public sphere of information exchange. For example, a pilot project in Florida makes it possible for cable subscribers to order merchandise from a Sears Roebuck catalog center by viewing the items on the tv set

and then pressing the required coded signal buttons to register and order with the merchant. The item is delivered to the customer and the billing is handled by computer and mail services. Result--the individual as a customer never ventures beyond his own home.

Consider also that this same process could apply to most other kinds of consumer activity such as grocery buying, instructional programs, all banking services, billing, and, of course, movies and television as recreational and entertainment source. The cautious cable advocates mentioned above fear that cable may create a 1984-type of community in which the only form of "community" is the common images and information shared by television screens and computer terminals in each individual household.

Nonetheless, this kind of consumer via cable mentality is a tempting use of the cable by local community institutions such as the Church. To perform its basic "services" or deliver its "product", the Church could function identically to the Sears and Roebuck experiment described above. Services for local maintenance could include fund-raising or membership drives. It seems humorous, or perhaps terrifying, to think of a church-telethon with dozens of volunteers manning the phones waiting for calls from members of the Church giving pledges or turning in names for membership.

A more reasonable proposal, and one in current use by many community agencies, is the use of designated cable channels to do the in-house training or educational function. Currently, several large school districts are experimenting with the educational reserve channel of cable to do in-service teacher training as required by state law. This means that teachers can receive required instruction in first aid, new teaching methods, available curriculum materials, and up-date of state and local educational information while seated in the privacy and convenience of their own homes. The program, in videotape could be repeated several times to allow a variety of convenient viewing periods.

For the Church, the application is identical. Sunday school teachers, ushers, church officials, and church members could all take "required" membership courses or "attend" training functions via the cable. The availability of nationally-produced material and the opportunity of repeating the program via tape make this function very tempting for a local Church's introductory effort on the cable.

Obviously, the list of particular uses in each of the above categories could be as long as the number of functions for training and program maintenance which are a part of the local Church. It does not seem necessary to itemize them one by one.

Church Mission

Under this category, I have grouped all of the functions of the local Church which relate to its ministry, social concerns, evangelistic programs, witness, and education beyond in-house training needs. In essence, here cable provides a different and perhaps more efficient way for the Church to accomplish a set of tasks it currently performs in other ways with other means.

Regular broadcast television has listed religious "services" and shows among its program offerings for many years. Cable television simply extends this function to more Churches and more local communities. Worship services, or just the pastor preaching, are the common form and content of such "services". Little, if any, changes have been made to adapt the Church's worship ministry to the particular capabilities of the television tube. In particular, the communication is one-way. It is the Church via the pastor delivering the word to the world. But even this basic function could be changed via the two-way function of cable. However, the Sunday "talkback" of the congregation to the minister's sermon has rarely been successful in the flesh and there is little reason to believe that television distance will make any appreciable change.

The taping and cable casting of Church services to shut-ins is a very real and genuine ministry, one that is

currently done by local Churches via the printed sermon or the tape cassette. The televised service would be more visible and for the shut-in, more participatory.

Obviously, special services and programs could be cablecast the same way and with much the same effect. Perhaps the key question is whether or not the Church and its program planners can adapt the special programs or the regular Sunday services to the unique possibilities of cable television. Television can be best used when consideration is given to the particular characteristics of the medium and programming is planned with those characteristics in mind.

As indicated in "in-house" uses of cable, educational or instructional programming is a natural use of cable television in that it allows convenient viewing in private homes at a variety of viewing times. Most local churches have experienced the frustration of planning "community forums" and open classes in a wide variety of subject areas, of scheduling speakers and panels, and of offering films, plays, etc. only to be reminded that the public is often apathetic to public information and perhaps even suspicious and put-off by the fact that the sponsor is a Church. The delivery of such programs via the cable may be a way of overcoming excuses of transportation, scheduling, convenience, announcements, or the possible negative connotations associated with the Church's sponsorship of

particular programs. Again, classes or lectures, or film series, delivered via cable may be repeated a number of times to allow greater access and a wider viewing audience.

Sunday school or Wednesday Church nights could deliver their educational or informational functions via cable. This is no attempt to replace or excuse the community-building and sharing functions which are a part of any local congregation's activity. However, it surely must be the case that part of community-building is information-sharing, that is, the building of a common base of information for use by members of the community. In this regard, CATV is a precise, economical, and reliable medium, almost specifically tailored to the needs of an information-based system.

Information programs are also considered in a Church's ministry with social concerns. For example, one of the most creative and effective uses of the cable medium would be to provide senior citizens with information on health care, social security, financial matters, and subjects of particular interest and need to them. A single cable channel could be programmed with such information and entertainment for senior citizens and thus help re-integrate them into society. This kind of basic information service would also be helpful for such groups as non-English-speaking peoples, providing public and special interest information in their own languages.

The major liturgical events during the Church year are an exciting possibility in the Church's use of cable. Many people have little or no connotation of the broad historical, liturgical calendar of the Church. For some, the Christmas Eve service of the New Year services from Rome, or from St. John's in New York City gave them their first look at the deeper foundations and events in the Church's tradition. Consider the possibilities for both the Church and the community if Advent, Easter, and Christmas festivals were carefully planned and "staged" for a television audience. It is not immodest to suggest that staging such festivals is necessary and even proper. It is a point of historical fact that the Church has always taken great care and preparation in the public events of its liturgical year. A restoration of some of this care and attention to "staging" would be a learning, re-claiming experience for the Church and a re-awakening of awareness and perhaps mystery for those outside of the Church. CATV could be a private means of viewing and participation for the community and a public means of celebration and witness for the Church.

Evangelism, as practiced by many Churches and sects, has encompassed broadcast television for years. But, perhaps, there are new functions and forms of evangelism which are particularly suited to television and for which CATV may provide new and creative imagination. Presently, the

only models and images which the Church and society has are the evangelical preaching and meditation services sponsored by the fundamentalist associations with private financial backing. In its own defense, it may be important for the Church to construct a television model of evangelism that is both theologically and traditionally sound and yet is relevant to contemporary needs.

CATV, on the viewer end, is a sufficiently private medium to allow experimentation with counseling processes and group therapy. Presently, several counselors and psychologists market tape cassettes which give audio instructions, guidelines, and examples to listeners for doing their own personal marriage counseling, personal growth, and inter-personal communication and action. The user is instructed in an exercise and then told to turn off the cassette player until he has completed the exercise. Sometimes blank tape is used to keep the tape running while the exercise is performed. Individual and group therapy could be effectively done via a cable tv format with participants doing the exercises or required communications in the privacy of their own homes. The visual and audible contact with the therapist/counselor will most likely increase the impact and effectiveness of a therapy program. In addition, supplemental material such as films, group discussions, lectures, or charts and slides could be delivered via the cable.

Personal, group, and family counseling processes could be conducted via cable as described above. But even more fundamental assistance in human relationships and communications could be delivered via cable. A weekly talk-show featuring Church or counseling center staff could focus on individual problems in family life and development. The distancing created by the television medium may make such counseling assistance more available to persons who would not seek out a counselor in his office or at a Church or counseling center. Obviously, any number of follow-up options can be made available to program viewers. Thus, more personal face-to-face counseling and development opportunities can be derived from the initial CATV introduction and "contact".

Church uses of cable, as described above, may best be determined by an appointed study commission in each local Church, or preferably, a joint study commission serving the interests and needs of several Churches in a community. There is no "book" on the ways in which cable may be used by the Church and it will be up to such a study commission to write one based on its own needs, perception, and imagination. It could indeed, be an exciting task.

One of the functions which such a commission should consider is the contacting of other Churches and communities to find out what use is being made of cable there and to share their own experiences and programs. National

denominational centers and the seminaries of the various denominations may also be a source of ideas and thought about the use of cable, and probably a source of specific programming for cable. The role of the seminary as a study and support agency for the local Church and cable is considered in the final chapter of this dissertation.

THE CHURCH AND CABLE IN THE COMMUNITY

In looking beyond its own needs and program, the local Church must ask itself questions that deal with its own self-perception and, in particular, questions about its ecclesiology, are means of internal organization. The chief resources available to the Church to assist with this task are those of Biblical tradition and historical ministry in its ecclesiological structuring. It is to this end that chapter three dealt with theological images provided by christological thinkers within the Church. And it is these images that will be definitive in shaping the ways and means in which local Churches will assist community development of the local cable system.

Let me repeat that one of the critical needs presently existing in the arena of community and cable is for a kind of value-oriented mid-wife to assure that questions of goals, values, and processes are asked alongside those of technology, finance, politics, and control. It is the contention of this paper that the local Church can provide

that kind of value-questioning and assure that a wide range of community inputs are solicited and heard in the preparation of a cable system and its programming.

For the Church to perform this function, it will need clarity in its own goals and self-perception, as well as awareness of what the community's images are of the local Church. The Church has its own unique and very powerful tradition to draw upon in shaping its work with the community. Three of those traditional elements are presented as being of particular value in the local Church's work with development of a cable system.

Emil Brunner has set forth the Christological image of the Christ or Church as "Mediator". Earlier, it was proposed that a key value of the Mediator image was one of reconciliation and of those values and moves which make reconciliation possible. The Church, as a mediator or agent of reconciliation, could offer to local communities those possible uses of cable which could help them overcome isolation and estrangement among their several neighborhoods, residents, political, social, and economic units, etc. Cable could make possible the immediate and in-depth sharing of ideas, opinions, experiences, problems, and possibilities that could help build a fully human community. Inasmuch as the Christ was that figure and historical event which was in itself the reconciliation between God and man, so the local Church seeks to provide reconciliation between

diverse elements of the community which must work together to overcome hardships and isolation and build a richer, fuller community in which to live. The Church in both perspectives provides a flow of information, ideas, and clarity which are illuminated by its own unique tradition as an institution which stands for reconciliation and forgiveness.

Specifically, the local Church could work to assure that all elements of the local community are heard when a cable system is being planned. The particular needs of a minority community, for example, must be taken into account as programming capabilities for CATV are projected and budgeted. Senior citizens may need special consideration in considering costs and service which the Church makes sure comes to the attention of cable planners. People and institutions having specific needs or contributions to make to a community could be heard because a local Church decided to act as a mediator/reconciler and assure that their ideas were presented to cable planners.

A local Church could also provide the necessary technical means to be heard and seen on cable should the situation call for that. For example, a significant segment of a community is in favor of a new development project affecting the size and shape of the city's airport. The plan calls for extending the main runway by 1750 feet to allow jumbo jets to land and thereby bring an increase

in passenger traffic with resulting (hoped-for) revenues for local businesses. The plan also calls for rezoning areas around the airport to allow for hotels, shopping centers, restaurants, etc. Supporters of the plan have large resources of money, skilled talent, and influence to present the plan in a favorable light to the community and to FAA, county, and state officials. However, there is a small neighborhood whose residents are primarily low income, minority, unemployed, who live directly in the path of the proposed runway extension, and will be affected adversely by jet noise, re-zoning, and traffic patterns, and who will in no way benefit from the new businesses planned by airport expansion backers. This is, in fact, an actual situation.

Using the local cable system and the access time required by FCC regulations, the affected neighborhood can make its reply in a detailed and effective way. The Church could assist this process: one, by assuring that the cable system makes time available; two, providing video equipment, especially porta-paks, to the neighborhood residents; and three, providing whatever technical or professional assistance is needed and available from the local congregation or friends of the Church. The porta-paks are used to provide a look at the affected neighborhood, interview its residents, and gather a community response for presentation to the total city, including airport and city officials,

and perhaps mailing the tape to county and state officials who could provide assistance and influence the final decision. By providing an accessible, hand-on communications tool, assuring that the community's tape will be cablecast, or delivered to appropriate groups and officials, and by insisting that the affected neighborhood thus gain full access to the decision-making process, the local Church could act as mediator and help the total community reach a reconciliation of ideas and action.

A second christological image was provided by Gustafson's perception of Christ and the Church as illuminative norm. It is Gustafson's proposition that Christ represents the beginning of a continuing community whose primary characteristics are those of trust and loyalty in Jesus Christ. These characteristics are then paralleled in the "disposition" of the Church as it acts and does mission in the world. The disposition elements are "hope" and freedom--the expressions of the Church's trust in Christ and the future and of loyalty to the life and word of Christ.

Both elements or themes of the Church's life and work serve as guidelines for the institutional and mission models which the local Church constructs to do ministry. Moreover, the Church has had historical experience with the working out, or demonstration, of these values. Its own institutional and celebrative life could be constructed as

a witness to these values and of their effectiveness in men's lives, and in the life of their communities. In such manner, the local institutional Church could serve as a model for the work and organization of other groups and agencies in the community. Its witness to the values of hope and freedom could instill those values in community groups or otherwise provide value norms for the community's efforts to solve problems and create a meaningful life and future for its residents. In this way, the local Church in any community could provide an "illuminative norm" for that community, a norm that would serve as a model for community growth and change.

In the specific case mentioned above concerning the proposed airport expansion and its support or opposition by different groups in the community, there is always a great need for a leadership position that believes that compromise and a solution are possible. That is, a voice that continually reminds all members of a community that solutions are possible to any problems and that all people of that community are empowered to work on a solution by virtue of the fact that they are members of the community. In the conflicts generated by the proposed runway extension and resulting development, both the proposal's supporters and the particular neighborhood most affected had a great stake in the airport's future. Likewise, both groups had an equal right to be heard and to reach a solution which

benefited the community as a whole, and did not work a hardship on any one group or neighborhood. The Church's role in this particular situation consisted of continually reminding airport developers of the human need and effects surrounding the proposal. Church spokesmen raised the issue of quality of life as it would be affected in the neighborhood should the runway be extended and the jumbo jets allowed to land over the homes and schools. It actively affirmed the right of all members of the community to live in health, safety, and pointed to the need for all of the community to be served by development and business interests.

In the low income neighborhood most affected, church activists were among the first ones to raise questions concerning the community's future should the expansion go through. When it was discovered that few members of the community even knew about the proposal, a local Church provided meeting places and duplicated copies of the proposal and announcements of a public meeting to be distributed to the neighborhood. In so doing, it affirmed the right of the neighborhood to meet and act on issues of concern to it and to do so in a spirit of cooperation and negotiation with other points of views on the proposal. The Churches in that same neighborhood cooperated in establishing a rumor control center to assure that information about the proposal and the community's response was

accurate and publicly available. When the issue came to public debate and decision, the community council of Churches sponsored public forums and provided publicity and public information concerning the several alternatives. In doing all of the above, church leaders sought to maintain an attitude of openness and trust among negotiators and different groups in the community. And it supported the right of the low-income neighborhood to actively work for a solution which provided both a quality standard of living and the possibility of jobs and new resources for new development in its own neighborhood.

Cable television provided some of the avenues of expression for the above debates and public information. The Churches used time available to them to air both sides of the controversy and also urged the cable system owner to make additional time available. This was particularly important as the community newspaper was on the side of the airport developers to the exclusion of all other opinions. Church leaders insisted that the cable operator recognize his responsibility under FCC regulations to provide fair hearing for the neighborhood's point of view. During the period of conflict over the proposed expansion, the cable operator was seeking to gain additional franchise privileges for the community, including wiring the neighborhood affected by the airport. Church leadership helped neighborhood people gain information and organize

a plan of development and use for CATV in that neighborhood. Church members likewise provided skills and resources in preparing a legal action compelling the cable company to wire all of the low income neighborhood regardless of its ability or likelihood of paying for cable service. In addition, national Church offices made available study papers and videotapes of the work of other cities in using cable to organize neighborhoods and conduct community business and decision-making.

The net result of the above actions meant that this particular neighborhood gained experience and tools in self-development and community organization. And they gained hope and confidence in their ability to shape their own future and control their own destinies.

Dorothee Soelle provided the third christological model in her outline of Christ, and the Church, as Representative. Soelle's work is particularly important in an age of pluralism or diversity, where a majority opinion is often hard to come by and compromise and negotiation become essential for community health and growth. It is peculiarly important that the Church comes to understand that cable television is indeed the television/communications medium of abundance--of pluralism. In an expanding pluralistic society, one of the great, and necessary, values is that of pluralism--the appreciation of diverse points of view and willingness to make a place for new and unfamiliar

opinions and groups. Soelle's understanding of the Christ as a representative--as one who represents those who cannot represent themselves--is specifically applicable to the growth of pluralism.

Soelle believes that to act as the representative in the same manner as the Church represents the world before God and God before the world is to help others find identity for themselves. It is to act in such a way as to hold open a place in society for those who cannot yet maintain their own identities and power in a world of pluralism.

Again, referring to the neighborhood's struggle for a different course of action than proposed by the airport developers, we must note that it was largely Church-related persons who provided the means and access for the minority opinion to be heard. It was the Churches who put pressure on the city and airport officials to consider the situation of and effect upon the low income neighborhood at the end of the proposed runway expansion. The Churches did not attempt to speak in place of the neighborhood, but to assure that they had the opportunity, time, and place to speak to and with those who were concerned with the same issue and problems. In the specific case of the cable television system, the Churches used their power and influence to represent a point of view that was not being heard or seen by the community. They likewise made it possible for the local neighborhood to represent itself by

making video equipment available for use by people in the neighborhood.

In a more important, and longer-lasting move, the Church assisted the development of a new self-identity and self-pride for the local neighborhood. Previously unorganized and without effective political or social voice, the neighborhood was largely powerless to effect decisions of consequence to its life. The experience of coming together in opposition to the plans of the airport developers provided the neighborhood with a new experience of power and a new tool of organization and identity with which to affect and control its future. As this change took place in the neighborhood and as its residents learned how to speak and work effectively on their own behalf, the Churches needed less and less to act as their representative and speak on their behalf. The Church always speaks in a general way on behalf of all poor and disenfranchised. Only when communities, groups, or individuals are unable to speak for themselves does the Church seek to speak in their places.

The theological models described above are on-going tasks for the Church. Local Churches should always be reflecting, designing, and testing new theological models in light of the particular experience and needs of the community and congregation. This is critical and should be repeated--the theological modeling task is ON-GOING!

Local Churches have additional resources to contribute to the development of cable as a community-building tool. The large physical facilities of local congregations have already been listed. Pluralistic development of cable and communities depends on a source of space and physical and financial assistance for new and emerging community groups to work with video equipment and with people in their communities. The Church has the undisputed corner on neighborhood space and buildings across the nation.

Likewise, as mentioned earlier, Church congregations have the widest possible spectrum of experience, talent, and skills upon which to draw for development of programs on cable. Such persons could be encouraged to donate their time and energy on behalf of neighborhoods, groups, and people who need access to cable and need experienced talent to use it.

In yet another area, it is not out of the question to believe that the local Church or its regional organization could provide financial assistance to groups or neighborhoods who are experimenting with CATV. The \$1750 required for a porta-pak is within the range of most Churches, or at least within the reach of several Churches acting together on behalf of a community. And some Churches have even decided that some investments warrant the mortgaging of Church property to provide necessary seed funds for projects, including assistance with cable pro-

gramming as in the Watts Malfundi Institute cable project.

Finally, the Church, in fact, provides a kind of legitimizing function in most communities when it lends support or speaks in behalf of an idea or people. As a stable element in communities, Churches have come to represent a kind of acceptability or tolerance under whose sponsorship new groups may organize and new programs may be produced. This legitimizing function is also a valuable resource for Churches to use.

Of course, the local Church is only the particular manifestation of a historical institution with a much broader institutional set of resources. Most importantly, the local Church may draw upon the learning and testing of its schools--the seminaries and colleges which provide much of its leadership and theological training and reflection. The seminary and its approach to cable is the subject of the fifth and final chapter of this dissertation.

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH'S SCHOOL - A RESOURCE FOR COMMUNITY AND CABLE

This final chapter is a very personal one. It concerns a vision, or more precisely, a series of images about the role the Church can play with the development of cable television in local communities. During three years of employment at the School of Theology at Claremont as Director of Audio-Visual Services, I had the opportunity to make very concrete and detailed plans for an on-going cable study program. This chapter is the summary of those plans and additional material gained in reflection and experience since I left the School in January of 1974.

That the seminary should involve itself with the future of cable television may be deduced from the earlier argument for the involvement of the local church. The seminary is the school, training center, and resource area for the local church. More than that, it is, or should be, a visionary place where the best that the Church has to offer may be undergoing continued renewal and re-training. It is the focal point for studies into the past of the Church's experience and teaching and it is the forward edge of the Church's movement into the future. Above all, it is the place where the Church should never be afraid to risk its own life as an institution in its search for new forms and meaning of the Gospel.

That a seminary is not these things is an institutional and human reality. But what is important is that it continues to search, experiment, and represent the Church's hope and belief in the renewing power of life as the gift of a faithful and constant Spirit. Not only does the Church provide physical and institutional thinking and models for the local church, but it must provide theological and spiritual models for the Church's self-understanding. It helps churches build institutional and personal rationale for change and renewal. It helps provide understanding of its past and re-interpretation of that past as new forms and facts of the human condition emerge.

This chapter, then, is the specific working-out of a new program for the study and resourcing of local churches in cable television. It is designed around the campus, faculty, and friends of the School of Theology at Claremont. And it is presented here in the hope that someday Claremont or a successor institution will have vision and hope to serve in this critical area.

A WORKING MODEL - PRACTICUM

This thesis has repeated over and over that cable television is relatively new in the technical field and for many people it is unknown or misunderstood. Perhaps the strongest means of acquainting an individual or a community with a particular subject is for them to have a

sustained experience of it in a variety of ways and in such manner as will allow them to explore and test it as something effective and appropriate for their own lives. CATV is a specific technology which expands the television medium so greatly that comparison to living room viewing or production at a local broadcast station simply fails to grasp even the most basic function and promise.

A short series of comparisons will help make the distinctions clear between cable and broadcast television. In present forms, broadcast television in both VHF and UHF bands can deliver about 94 channels. Cable television can presently deliver over 100, but only technical design temporarily prevents it from delivering in excess of 500 or more channels up to an infinite number. A broadcast station costs at least \$1.5 million to establish and start up, with about 30% of that required each year for maintenance, operation, repair and replacement. Depending upon the size of the area served and resulting cable runs, a CATV station which in one installation contains all possible channels costs between \$500,000 and \$1 million to establish a basic system. Unlike broadcast, cable must be extended to each new household or neighborhood specifically. Operating costs for broadcast television can exceed \$750-\$1000 per hour minimum while a cable system can be operated for \$90-\$150 per day for a small system and up to \$5000 per day for a large one covering the same area as a broadcast

station. These figures are only to indicate that establishing a major communications medium in a local community is now within the range of local city government, community groups, or a large number of people within a neighborhood. Television is not restricted to major corporations with large amounts of capital. The ball game has had a change in rules.

What should be of most concern to local churches is that the program potential of television has overnight increased beyond the capacity of most communities to fill. Groups, individuals, ideas, or institutions heretofore denied access to a major communications and exchange medium due to financial or technical restrictions have been given new tools and at much lower cost. It is this function which occupies the key position in this chapter. As demonstrated earlier, cable television, sometimes called 'The Television of Abundance' is the television of pluralism. It is the means of being heard for thousands of groups and ideas that only small numbers of people are familiar with. It is the medium for genuine exchange of ideas and hopes. But this is only possible if cable television has a capable mid-wife in local communities where it is now being born and raised.

Since the nature of cable television is unprecedented and therefore unexperienced by most people, one of the more useful functions which the Church could provide

through its schools is a working model of a cable system that people can participate in, experience, and change or adapt to their needs. Many communities now have cable but its use is restricted to limited functions that do not encourage study and experimentation with the medium. The seminary, specifically the School of Theology at Claremont could provide such a working model for members of towns, cities, and local communities to experiment with.

The following section makes specific reference to appendices II-V. These are the documents which comprise the particular technical guidelines upon which a model cable system could be constructed at the School of Theology at Claremont. Readers with a technical background may refer to the appendix to gain a rather complete picture of the cable system, but for the non-technical, a short written description will be presented here.

First, the cable system envisioned for the STC campus has its "head-end" or studio equipment in the 2nd floor television studio and control area of the Seeley G. Mudd Memorial Communications Building. From this location, live and taped programs may be distributed via coaxial cable to all other buildings on the campus. At this base end, a series of tuned receivers coupled to antennas on the roof of the building electronically place over-the-air broadcast signals on the cable along with live programming initiated from the television studio. These same electron-

ics will enable viewers to receive the UHF stations 28 KCET (PBS) and 68 KVST (PBS) on the same VHF range as channels 2, 4, 5, etc. This will be useful to those residents and in classrooms where television receivers are not equipped with UHF tuners. This also demonstrates one of the functions of CATV currently in practice in most systems-- the re-locating of signals on the bandwidth to provide a wider variety of program sources.

A second major feature of the cable system will be a number of sub-studio locations along the master cable network which will allow specific locations and offices on campus to initiate programming directly over the cable without returning either physically or by tape to the master control in the Mudd Building. For example, one studio is placed in the rare book room of the library allowing library staff and faculty to initiate programs concerning the library and scholarly material directly from their storage and use locations. A second studio remote could be placed in the Registrar's office for use by administrative staff--particularly as a possible resourcing operation during registration and degree advisement periods. A third remote site could be in the Academic Building allowing guest lecturers or regular classes to be broadcast over-the-cable live to other campus areas, including on-campus housing. Note that this function does not automatically mean that students will "attend" class via television. It

may mean that students who may be ill, spouses, or visitors to the campus may "attend" class without disturbing the actual classroom setting. Likewise, classes could be taped from the remote facility and re-broadcast in the evening for review, re-study or catch-up by students who could not be present during normal hours.

An additional location for a remote studio could be the chapel--largely as a means for either overflow or study of the usefulness and effect of televised worship services currently in use in many communities. Our own tradition emphasizes the necessity for a "wholistic" community, usually interpreted to mean physically close or in proximity to one another during our celebration and worship. Perhaps there are ways to use television communications to "share" worship, perhaps not. But the existence of a cable tap in the chapel area could help define the issues, problems, values, etc. of using television for worship experience.

The most important location for remote studios will undoubtedly be in the on-campus housing areas--both Methodist and Disciples, plus any that may be built in the future. The housing areas simulate real neighborhoods that community cable television actually serves. It is, however, a kind of controlled environment in that all residents have common community ties as students and spouses for the school's broader goals. Hence, there is a common

base for measurement of program effectiveness and new ideas for cable usage. The studios located in the housing areas are specifically designed as "talk-back" facilities. That is, their use is oriented towards the cable's audience who are thus enabled, and allowed, to make a direct response back to the program initiating elsewhere on campus or even to the other viewers of the program. There is no real need for there to be an initial program for viewers to react to. All that would be necessary is for two or more individuals or groups in the remote housing facilities to take time to exchange communications via cable.

The details of the location of the cable, its associated amplifier and distribution equipment, and actual in-apartment hook-up are noted in the following appendices. Likewise, a diagram and equipment list of a remote studio --one located in Methodist housing--will describe that facet of the proposal. In addition, limited technical specifications are provided for the necessary switching apparatus that will allow the remotes to program the cable in addition to the master studio. For the record, "cable", in this proposal, refers to two coaxial cables, one carrying downstream programs--that is from the master studio--and another identical cable carrying programming from the "return" sources--the housing "talk-back studios". Remote studios located in academic, office or service buildings of the campus may be switched onto either the "downstream"

or "upstream" (return) cable as the particular situation warrants.

With this limited technically-sparse description before us, it will be most useful to describe the two major functions which the "model cable system" could perform.

Experience of Programming

As this paper has indicated earlier, CATV has not yet penetrated many local communities. In fact, at present, only about 28-31% of American towns and cities have any kind of cable system, including a basic community antenna system. However, construction of new cable systems and expansion of old ones is on the increase and many cities and states now require built-in elements of the cable system in all new construction regardless of whether or not a CATV system exists in the community. By most indicators, however, 80-85% of American communities will have some kind of cable system by the 1980's. Experience of such systems and their potential may help us prevent the Orwell vision of 1980--a very real possibility with CATV.

What would be of real value to Church and community leaders is the opportunity to actively and fully experience a cable system for a period of time in such manner as would give them a real understanding, appreciation, and caution

about cable's potential. Presently, an experience of cable, for community people considering the design and construction of one, is limited to a visit to a cable studio with the tour being conducted by a company representative, or perhaps visits to friends and neighbors currently subscribing to cable services, or maybe the curious seekers can find a state or university-sponsored conference about cable television. In the case of the latter, community people are most likely to be extremely confused or divided in the information and opinions they gather from such an event. Present conferences, workshops, hearings, etc. usually serve as a sounding board for a wide range of people with a variety of interests in cable. Almost certainly the financial interests will be a strong voice at the conferences, as will the federal regulatory personnel from the Federal Communications Commission. The community members in attendance will probably find themselves represented by "underground video freaks or visionaries", to use their own titles, or by city officials who have some recent experience with CATV in their communities and have come either to brag or warn the potential newcomers to the cable picture.

Thus, persons wanting to understand a broad, conceptual and practical role for CATV in their communities will have to listen and observe the various conflicting interests very carefully.

At best, such conferences will suggest areas for new CATV communities to study, watch out for, and give special attention to. The experience of other towns and cities in dealing with cable is the best teacher. It is most important that workshop or conference participants do not take as "Gospel" the opinions of such "professionals and experts" as governmental personnel from regulatory agencies or representatives from various manufacturing interests. Likewise, financial interests should be taken with a grain of salt. All of these sources will first of all represent their own area and, in so doing, give you some kind of picture of the future of CATV from their point of view. But cable is too new, too complex, and the technology and law is changing too rapidly for any one source or speaker to truly have the accurate picture. In retrospect, you may discover that one person or interest was more accurate in his prediction than others, but this will likely be either blind luck or only a temporary phenomenon. The CATV field is most unstable and unpredictable.

There is, therefore, a need for a facility at which community members could live and work with a fully operational cable system for weeks at a time. The system ideally would be one in which current technology and the best programming skills and resources would be available to participants. It would be a setting in which physical isolation of separate eating and sleeping facilities for

each person or family would be balanced by areas where small group or whole, temporary, new communities could come together. In addition, it should be an area in which a wide variety of programming resources is available for use on a cable system, especially those program possibilities which are characteristic of a pluralistic culture and environment. I refer here to location in cities or communities in which a wide variety of economic and social condition is present, and in which "temporary residents of a cable community" could have rapid access to different neighborhoods, business and recreational locales.

Based on the above qualifications, Claremont School of Theology seems almost tailor-made. It is located in the Pomona Valley which currently has both the top and bottom 5% of the economic sphere represented. The variety of neighborhoods include middle-class suburban, wealthy preferred communities, rural, isolated areas, urban and urban-industrial neighborhoods, and a fairly large number of racial and minority communities. The school's campus has apartment-style housing for about 100 families or individuals, living in two separate complexes which are still within the campus grounds. The Los Angeles area and the reputation of the School of Theology, the Claremont Graduate School and related undergraduate colleges assure such a model cable system of resource people in all related fields of concern to cable study. Los Angeles currently

has one of the nation's largest cable systems and the technological research for much of the industry is located in the greater L.A. area. Likewise, the academic and social organization fields will be well represented by schools, private institutes, universities, and community organizations of a diverse order. The beach communities in the L.A. area also contribute some key resources in that they are the home for several of the video visionaries and video freak groups which have contributed heavily to probing of the future and cable tv.

For the Church, Claremont has long been a center of study in theology and related and correlated disciplines. The building of a cable study center at the School would only be one more way in which Claremont serves as the "Church's school".

It will be useful to imagine a scenario for this program:

First Scene: The School's Registrar and Dean of Studies announce 9-12 months prior to summer that a unique "live-in" workshop in cable television will be held during a two-week period in late July. Applications for the workshop require that participants come prepared to live in campus housing and adhere reasonably closely to an established schedule of events and programmed environment. Housing space for workshop participants should be desig-

nated and cleared with Disciples and Methodist Housing Offices at least three months before summer classes begin. At the beginning of summer, technical support staff should see that each apartment to be used by workshop participants is furnished with a good quality television set and that the appropriate hookups to cable have been made.

As a part of the workshop's preparation, each housing area should have set aside in it a single room--perhaps a single student's apartment--for use as a remote "downstream studio". These areas should be equipped with camera, monitors, good lighting equipment, microphones and audio mixer. These areas will function as community studios for talk-back programs or inter-community communication. They will be studios much like the main Mudd Building facility, but much simpler to operate and maintain. Particularly important, they will have equipment and operation identical to that currently used in many of the public access studios in cable systems across the country. Thus, workshop participants are gaining experience on equipment which they are likely to find available in their own communities. Additionally, such equipment is financially within the ability of most church or community groups to purchase and maintain.

The final element of preparation for a summer workshop is the securing of a number of video porta-paks, tape supplies, and accessories. These are the key tools by

which workshop participants will generate programming for distribution in their temporary "cable community". Although studio facilities will be available for use by workshop members, the porta-pak is the device which will probably be most accessible and most within the financial capabilities of the local church and community group. In addition, the porta-pak, by virtue of its size and weight, is the ideal means of extending the "wired community" into neighborhoods, homes, and street corners available to the workshop. It is a less intimidating piece of equipment than other video gear and thus it may be easier for persons to accept and learn to experiment with.

Scene Two: As participants arrive at the Claremont campus, they are assigned housing with both Disciples and Methodist units being filled at approximately the same rate. As part of their orientation and resource materials, workshop members are furnished a schedule and program guide for the on-campus cable system. It is important that all over-the-air programming normally available be located on the cable system as FCC Regulations require. In addition, the two-week program schedule will contain a full afternoon and evening roster of programs made specifically for the cable system. Much of this can be secured from off-campus sources or drawn from the School's own video-tape library. At least a two-hour slot is reserved each evening for the

cable-casting of the tapes produced by workshop members. Should they so desire, additional time may be made available for workshop productions by dropping out selected items on the schedule.

During the early meetings of the workshop, participants are invited to place on the cable any programming they may have brought with them from their communities. It is made clear to the participants that successful evaluation of cable's present and potential usefulness depends upon their deliberate and attentive tuning-in and study of what is broadcasted. However, such a guideline should not be made mandatory.

During the first meeting of the participants, they are given maximum 24-hour access to video-taping equipment in either the studios or with porta-paks. It is important that good technical support be available for service and repair of any of the equipment. Extra batteries and a generous supply of tape for each participant is equally important. A large program calendar should be centrally located for listing times available for tapes to be played on the cable. The contents of this calendar could be listed on a dittoed program as well as on a video display card and distributed daily to the workshop members.

In addition, a limited amount of editing equipment should be centrally located for use by workshop members who want more sophisticated programming. This is NOT a

critical or even major resource. As will be explained later in this chapter, the experience of uncut, un-polished programming is considered more important than the normal polished, or at least edited, programming, which is the form of the broadcast and big cable system. Part of the technology and social impact which conference members should experience is the pluralism of content and presentational forms. That cable programs may do different things with different subjects and different people needs little explanation, but the actual viewing, and suffering, experience of that pluralism is a different matter and one that will help the workshop participants understand some of the more fundamental and revolutionary possibilities of the new medium.

Scene Three: During the two-week period of the workshop, participants should be encouraged to respond to cable programming in whatever manner seems appropriate and useful--especially considering that they have access to video-tape equipment, cable studios, resource people, and each other as neighborhood groups and formal/informal organization. This particular element of the workshop is intended to provide re-enforcement for the belief that CATV is essentially a tool for organization and communication in a local community. Cable programming, intent and effect, thus become proper subjects for community evaluation and action.

It may prove possible to undertake a particular research or action project using video equipment and the cable. For example, one team may discover a local neighborhood with a particular problem--perhaps the need for a stoplight to protect children or irregular trash and garbage collection by the city--or maybe a more positive note such as community hopes for a new park or recreation program. Using the workshop equipment, and carefully budgeted time, team members could sound out the various sides and opinions of the issue and work to present a composite picture of the subject on the school cable system. If the workshop members feel that time is available, involvement of several community residents in the description, and evaluation of the tape would add to the usefulness and learning value of the project.

Scene Four: As additional input to the workshop, the schedule should include a variety of special work and teaching sessions on such aspects of CATV as present and emerging technology, continuing education via cable, arts and cultural events on cable, safety and community services via cable, ordinance planning and writing, regulation and ownership of cable, to name only a few important subjects. Leaders and designers of the workshop can decide to have available a wide variety of cable program examples currently in use in community cable systems across the country.

This material, presented over the cable as a regularly scheduled event, could provide participants with a wide range of concrete examples of cable's ability to handle various topics, problems, and processes.

Clearly, there is the danger of "information overload"--especially as much of the participants' time and attention is focused on the "tube". Even if the program is of your own making, there is a limit to the amount of interest and attention a viewer can spare without blanking out both serious consideration and a wider appreciation of the television medium. Such scheduling decisions could be made by the workshop members during the two weeks as need arises. Likewise, a clear contract before the workshop begins may be a useful means of assuring both time and attention commitment by participants.

Experience in Programming

The section above already hinted at several areas of student and members of the community experience of cable television programming. The video porta-pak is a tool which is becoming increasingly accessible to more and more persons in the Church and local communities. Hence, experience of preparing a program on videotape and possibly for cable distribution is more and more common. Local schools and colleges, including extension services, are offering increased opportunities to learn the use of such

equipment. For many elementary and high school classrooms, the porta-pak is a fairly common tool for learning.

It is still the case, however, that there are few on-going opportunities to take a unique, once, and limited instruction and evaluation class in production of video materials. A cable study center at Claremont could provide just such an on-going opportunity. Using the new studio facilities and equipment of the Mudd Communications Building, students and short-term workshop students can gain valuable experience in the operation of a cable program production facility. In addition to cable programming, students could use such training and experience to produce programs in continuing education, curriculum materials, or to prepare their churches for working with commercial broadcast stations.

Studio production in itself constitutes the most common and reliable means of television/cable production available to local church and community groups. It is, therefore, a most important resource of production skills that local church members can acquire. But the less expensive and more portable equipment represented best by the 1/2" porta-pak--pioneered and dominated by Sony--should also be a training staple of the communications center program. This smaller, less expensive technology represents the most exciting way to introduce television into local neighborhood community groups. Obviously, there are

also many alternatives and in-betweens to these two production poles, but skills with both of these options should assure good familiarity with most other kinds of production set-ups.

A major portion of time in programming experience should be centered around the various format options available to users of local cable systems. Many cable systems offer only the first come, first served time slots to community users and thus group all such program sources into one general "community input" time slot usually scheduled at a particular time and day on the cable schedule. Almost certainly, such users are scheduled on the "public access" channel designated and required by FCC regulations. A step up from this means of available time is the designated time slot specifically reserved for a particular source of programming. Users of this kind of time slot have usually demonstrated consistently good programming both in technical and content categories, and have thus "earned" the right to a regular time and space on the cable. From the point of view of the cable company, such a commitment of regular time and space is granted only to users who have strong financial and programming resources and from whom there is little likelihood of technical or scheduling problems. A regular time slot is just that--regular--and users of cable have, thereby made a commitment to provide programming to fill that time slot on a regular weekly, or

daily, basis.

Beyond the categories of "public access" and "designated" time slots mentioned above, there is the cable user's ultimate dream of a designated channel reserved entirely for a single programming source's use. FCC regulations currently provide such designation of channels only for municipal government programming, educational programming by the local educational authority, and the above-mentioned public access--a sort of catch-all for community groups. The fact that very, very few of these designated channels in cable systems across the country have anywhere near a capacity programming load is, unfortunately, a convincing argument to cable system owners and managers not to promote expansion of public access facilities for local community involvement. Of course, that argument is double-edged. If cable companies provided more support for community initiative and use of cable, the programming load would increase. For the moment, however, the initiative seems to be on the side of the cable system owners and managers.

Listing the three major time slots available serves as an introduction to the problem of selecting a program format for use in local communities. There is a wide variety of formats available, all depending somewhat upon the kind and amount of time available. But even more important, cable "abundance" and the use of user-available,

portable equipment means that program formats are more open to experimentation than ever before. Granted that the cable operator will have some qualifications concerning technical quality and FCC compliance in only the most broad categories. For the most part, however, the format looms before new and potential cable users as a great void, or "wasteland" as some have put it, to be explored and developed.

Some examples will be useful here. The most common cable format in present usage is the panel or interview. It accounts for about 85% of local origination programming in most systems. The reasons are obvious. The panel or interview is a fast set, simple and economical to build, easy to "shoot" from the technical end, and the easiest to introduce and train new users in. A newcomer to television and cable programming will have his hands full scheduling program materials, personnel, time, publicity, content, etc. without having the space and calm to consider a new more effective format. Most systems build the panel/interview set from the day they open and users are routinely programmed into it.

A second major format presently in use is for the cable user to bring in his own videotape, pre-recorded for broadcast (cablecast) over the system. It is a shame to say, but these pre-recorded programs are usually carbon copies of the cable studio's format, eg--a panel or inter-

view done at some location in the community. For the Church, the analogy consists of providing videotapes which are little more than taped services in the sanctuary, or taped meditations of "chats" with the minister, over his desk in his study, with books or a small altar for a backdrop. The specifics may be different, but the communication is the same.

A third source and format of programming is to use commercially available films, often from distribution sources unique to the using institution. Local school districts will bring in 16mm films to cablecast which are distributed by the NEA, or a national textbook distributor, or encyclopedia manufacturer, etc. The local church may bring in a film distributed by its national publishing house or radio-film-television commission. Such programs do have a distinct advantage over the above panel/interview format. They offer a wider variety of locations and settings for program material as they use film cameras which are not confined to studios. Likewise, the technical quality of such professional film productions is likely to be far superior to much of the program materials available to access users on videotape.

A fourth source of cable programming, and a fourth format, is the use of electronically-produced program material. This is a medium currently used by the "video freaks" or experimenters in the CATV field. In addition,

serious contemporary artists have developed the video signal as a unique art form in itself and are producing videotapes which parallel the expressionistic and impressionistic movements in painting. It would be interesting to see persons in a local church experiment with the video equipment available to them as a means of artistic expression of Christian themes. While probably not a major source of programming, it should not be overlooked inasmuch as it provides a simple and economical means of working in an entirely new medium.

Finally, while indirectly referred to in previous descriptions of CATV programming, the video $\frac{1}{2}$ " porta-pak deserves to be mentioned as a unique fifth source format of programming. The porta-pak may be used in all of the kinds of programming listed above, but in itself it brings a unique dimension to the possibilities of the CATV experience. The key indicator of the porta-pak's effectiveness is indicated by the "porta", standing for portable. It is a fully self-contained television camera and recorder. Its operation is simplistic in the extreme and its tape capacity is at the bottom line of economic reality. But it is the ability of the porta-pak to go places and record things that would not normally be part of the television experience that is its unique contribution. A single operator using only natural light, or indoor available light can record and document activity, culture, and people

in their natural environment. They may do so without enfringing upon that environment or distorting it with the impact of technology as is the case of professional television and film production units. And because the technology--the porta-pak--is sufficiently simple in operation, it may be operated by a member of the particular culture or environment under examination. It may become a part of a "self-study" effort by a community seeking to concretize its own identity or to define that identity to those outside of that community. As this concerns cable programming, the porta-pak is one means by which individuals or a community of people may retain full control over their own self-explanation and statement in a dialogue with others. Because they themselves become the cameramen, soundmen, director, producer, and editors, they can shape the message and the form in ways which are consistent with their own self-understanding and resources. Thus, cable and the porta-pak more truly reflect the world and the people in it as they are. This is the genius of cable television and it is this capability which the local church should work most closely to protect and cultivate.

In brief, the experiences in programming which will be the most valuable ones for the church and the seminary to understand are those which best allow ordinary, non-technical persons to tell their own story via cable systems. For many churches, only the cable system studio

will be available for thier use and the effectiveness of programming will, in part, depend upon the church and other groups in the community taking the time and effort to explore the medium fully and make it possible for others to explore it as well. Some churches will find it possible to invest in porta-pak equipment to be loaned to individuals and groups within the community to facilitate their access to the cable. In this manner, the church's experience in programming is also an exercise in stewardship and ministry. The local church cannot set the agenda nor can it edit the content or change the form of what is produced by users of equipment which it makes available. But the real experience of programming for the church will be to watch the process and product of people using the porta-paks and the studio equipment. For then, it is the community and its people which is setting the agenda and working out its goals. In one sense, it is the world come to the church.

CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

As an educational institution, the School of Theology might reasonably be expected to provide strong classroom experience in the study and development of CATV. Since the study of cable and its use and effects in a community are rather a specialized area of study, particularly for a seminary and graduate institution, it may be useful to conceptualize a series of classes or workshop

experiences as being the curriculum of an independent Study Center or Institute which is located at and uses the facilities of the School of Theology at Claremont. The Institute model is a most useful means of handling both the experimental nature of a new program, while also being realistic about the propensity to change inherent in a very specific, specialized type of curriculum and research subject.

A Study Center for cable television, with particular attention to the roles that an enlightened clergy and lay membership could fulfill, would need to shape and schedule its class and workshop offerings at times most convenient for their expected students. For a voluntary association such as the Church, short-term weekend workshops may be a high priority while city administrative personnel may be more available for longer periods during the regular business year cycle. The course which specializes in experience of and with CATV, as described above, will necessarily have to arrange schedules during two, or perhaps three, week periods when expectations of attendance may be the highest. Summer has usually been the most appropriate time for such extended workshops. Obviously, some of the classes may be offered on a normal semester or quarter basis with students being drawn from geographically-surrounding areas which make regular commuting possible. A much wider area of prospective students will be more

likely to be tapped by summer sessions, or perhaps holiday vacation periods. These sessions will have to be planned and announced well in advance--at least 9 months to a year.

Technology and Value Clarification

One of the areas of greatest importance for a Study Center to offer material and workshops in is that of the nature of technology and the resulting impact on values and value clarification. Envisioned in this course is a serious analysis of the way people attach values, consciously or unconsciously, and how that process is affected by technology and technological change, specifically that generated by and within the communications industries. The relationship of this subject matter to cable television is obvious, and yet, not so obvious. Several examples have already been cited as evidence of the incredible potential of the CATV medium. Its capacity for creative development of communities has been described as well as its negative potential to create the system described in George Orwell's book, 1984.

But the most subtle effect that cable television will have is probably a positive one. For those of us (all of us?) accustomed to the television as a stable part of our lives and our information systems, many of us have yet to discover the enormous consequence that television has produced in our opinion-formation, decision-making, and

value-setting ideas. Whether we are a victim or a suspicious commentator on television and commercials, or tv and violence, or family values vs. public stereotypes, television image and soundtrack all work to shape our sense impressions, and thereby belief systems, concerning the real world. Most of our television experience has been based on the great lowest common denominator--an idea that producers and advertisers could agree upon. "Common" denominator is often more important than we realize, as at present 80% of our news comes from three news service wires, and 78% of our programming comes from nationally distributed network programs. The room for diversity seems small and within any state-wide area, most programming will be virtually the same for all communities. But, cable television is the television of abundance and, hopefully, diversity. That fact, and potential fact, could change the kind of information and television experience upon which much of our opinion and belief systems are based.

Knowledge of the technology of television and all mass communications and its potential for affecting value formation and clarification is critically important for any person concerned with the quality and diversity of human life. Likewise, awareness of the nature and potential of cable television as a medium for pluralistic inter-community and inner-community communication is important as people study alternatives to the mass medium and also consider the

effect of present and future technology in their lives.

The following is a modest suggestion for a class outline in the subject area:

THE NATURE OF TECHNOLOGY AND VALUE CLARIFICATION

- I. A Brief History of the Industrial and Technology Revolution in America
- II. The Mass Media as Technology
 - A. The printed word--books, newspapers, periodicals
 - B. The spoken word--radio, audio tape, records
 - C. The visual word--television, graphics, photography
- III. The Technology of Cable Television
 - A. The wired community--cable distribution systems
 - B. Access and skill requirements
 - C. Experience and examples of cable programming
- IV. The Nature of Value Development and Value Systems
 - A. Experience--childhood
 - B. Reflective and examined experience
 - C. Value systems
 1. Niebuhr--illustrations
 2. Traditional "Christian" value imagery
- V. Value Change in the pre-21st Century
 - A. How are traditional values dis-oriented?
 - B. Electronic "instant" values--disassociation and association
- VI. Information as a Component of Value Development
 - A. Cable television and pluralistic input
 - B. Feedback as value clarification--cable's potential
- VII. How to Do Ethics in an Age of Pluralism
 - A. Respect for different experience and traditions
 - B. Communication and value clarification
 - C. Affirming the future
 1. New means of establishing new values
 2. Ways of affirming and demonstrating value

Communication and Community Organization

A second area of study directly affected by the coming, or present, nature of cable television is that of community organization. Organizers in low-income and/or minority communities have long realized that the most critical problem facing the development of a community is the lack of a consistent, critical, and public communications system within the community. Certainly, low-income and minority communities are not alone in this problem of organization, but in these cases, the situation has been most pronounced and critically defined. Also, this does not mean that a fast communications system does not exist. For most community workers and organizers, the real problem is not to build a communications system, but to locate the one that already exists and learn how to use it. Such systems are, however, not an "instant" mass medium, nor are they consistently pluralistic, two-way, or even open-ended. It is the sharing of information and the exchange of information, opinions, and experience that is of greatest importance to the local community organizers.

CATV seems tailor-made for community organization processes and goals. It is economically feasible for most communities. It is technologically sophisticated for instant use over a large area, yet is simple in operation and, therefore, accessible to the electronic novice, or

the one more concerned with the message than the medium. It is two-way, allowing feedback and instant response and direct evaluation. It is pluralistic, allowing even the most powerless and remote segment of a community equal footing with the majority and powerful influences. And, it is private at the discretion of the subscriber/viewer.

Church leaders should be concerned with the skills of organizational development and task-oriented groups. They are as valuable a set of skills as pastoral counseling and preaching were in earlier years. The problems, needs, and process of a local congregation and community have changed in many respects; new skills are necessary for the Church to respond and minister. The great potential of cable as a tool for community organization and development makes it even more essential that clergy and skilled lay persons become familiar with CATV and organizational skills as they can affect the lives of people in their parish and community.

Again, a modest example of a workshop in CATV and Community Organization:

- I. People and/in Communities
 - A. A "Community" in the Christian tradition
 - B. The modern urban and suburban communities
 - C. The "electronic" community
 - 1. the media audience
 - 2. the wired community

- II. Organizational Styles--a broad survey
 - A. Management--task-oriented
 - B. Co-ordinator--traffic-oriented
 - C. Voluntary vs. non-voluntary organizations
 - D. Personal and non-personal organization
 - E. Associations
 - F. Temporary task-oriented
 - G. Subject-oriented
- III. Communication and Organization
 - A. Pyramid--from the top-down
 - B. Voluntary/democratic--from the top-up
 - C. Mass vs. channeled communication
 - D. Two-way communications
 - 1. personal
 - 2. inter-personal
 - 3. mediated
- IV. Information as an Organizational Tool
 - A. Local input/local control
 - B. Response
- V. Communications Mediums
 - A. Printed--book, newspaper, periodicals (one-way)
 - B. Audio--radio, record, tape (one emerging two-way)
 - C. Video--television (one-way) and CATV (two-way)
- VI. CATV and Organizational Styles
 - A. Local and controlled
 - B. Accessible and pluralistic
 - C. Voluntary and temporary
 - D. Subject-oriented
- VII. CATV and the Community
 - A. How to organize the non-organized
 - B. Guaranteeing pluralism by accessibility
 - C. Goal-setting and evaluation

Programming for Cable Television

The most direct and in-demand information that Claremont could offer potential students of CATV is how to prepare programming for a local cable system. Many churches already have offers or inquiries from cable companies

about placing church services on cable as part of the operator's obligation for "community service" time. Typically, churches which have accepted such an offer have responded with a Sunday service in miniature, providing over the cable the same fare that is available in the church sanctuary on Sunday. Previously, an argument against the churches making this sort of response was put forward. Now it is time to suggest possible alternative kinds and sources of programming which the Church could either prepare or could in itself or with other organizations, sponsor and encourage.

As indicated earlier, the real strength of cable television's capabilities is its abundance--its ability to cablecast at least 100 separate programs with current technology. As technology improves on present designs, this number will increase as much as 5- or even 10-fold. This raises a peculiar problem for persons responsible for programming of cable systems. With a great abundance of channels available, the natural selectivity in securing good quality programming decreases while the accessibility of a wider range of programming, much of it technically inferior, increases. Likewise, content of available programming tends to become either highly personalized or non-discriminating regarding its potential audience. FCC regulations allow a cable operator to restrict or "censure" programming only in the most blatant cases of obscenity or

danger to public order and safety. Therefore, creative programming will probably be at a minimum, its availability at a premium, and resources, including finances, to produce good programming will be stretched to the breaking point.

Because cable is a local community medium, it becomes the community's major responsibility to help provide or direct available resources to produce quality programs for the cable system. Nonetheless, local institutions with a wider range of contacts, resources, and experiences, will be in a position to assist limited locally available skills and material resources. For the Church, therefore, an ideal situation already exists to provide a wide range of programming both for use in local systems and as illustrations for people developing local programming.

Again, an outline of a course dealing with cable programming will be helpful.

PROGRAMMING FOR THE LOCAL CABLE SYSTEM

- I. An Overview of What Is Currently Available
 - A. Syndicated production--nationally
 - B. Regional production and distribution networks
 - C. Local production--independents
- II. Measuring Cable Programming by Its Promise
 - A. Are community needs met? - how to determine community needs
 - B. Who produces programs--local, syndicated, or network?
 - C. Who has access?
 1. public--without funds or experience
 2. local institutions--churches, civic groups, government
 3. commercial sponsors of programming

- III. Sources for Community Programming (with tape illustrations)
 - A. On-going community activities--sports, parades, festivals, etc.
 - B. Cultural events--museums, concerts, etc..
 - C. Political--council meetings, zoning commission, fair housing commission, etc.
 - D. Educational--elementary schools, high schools (non-sports), etc.
 - E. Ethnic--ethnic community events--dances, festivals, holidays, etc.
 - F. Religious--festivals and liturgy of community faiths
 - G. Organizational--surveys of area clubs, associations, etc.
 - H. Neighborhoods--exploring the community, who lives where....
 - J. Problem solving--information and points of view on community issues, such as new streets, quality of life, pollution, recreation facilities, etc.
 - K. Local forums on national issues--local political parties, spokesman for national associations--NRA, Labor, Common Cause, etc.
- IV. Building Community via a Cable System
 - A. Communication--what sources does the community respect?
 - 1. institutions--government, church, ?
 - 2. individuals--mayor, councilman, minister, ?
 - B. What information can the cable deliver effectively?
 - 1. announcements about real events--time, locations, etc.
 - 2. quality of life information--health aids, environmental, energy, etc.
 - 3. insights/acquaintance with other members of the community
 - 4. emergency news--weather warnings, traffic, etc
 - C. New ideas and images
 - 1. city planning--ideas of Soleri and Fuller
 - 2. transportation--computer/CATV--scheduled neighborhood shuttles
 - 3. integrating the non-integrated--old age, minorities, poor
 - D. Education--school in the home, continuing education, skill training, personal enrichment, supplemental...

- V. Evaluating Programming--an on-going task
 - A. Community access for feedback and talkback--via cable
 - B. Presentation of alternative programming suggested by viewers
 - C. Are community needs being met?
 - D. What are other communities doing?

The Porta-Pak and the Community

In various chapters of this paper, attention has been specifically given to the video porta-pak as a tool for a wide variety of programs and tasks in local communities. The porta-pak's availability was illuminated by the coming of cable television as an outlet and distribution medium for amateur television producers. Likewise, the porta-pak has been and continues to be one of the key means for making cable television an exciting and versatile servant for the local community.

Several implications of the porta-pak's unique contribution to the cable and community should be repeated here. First, it is a user-operable medium. It requires very little training and has been and is being used by 9- and 10-year-old children with little risk of damage. Because it is user-operable, it is an independent medium requiring only the person or persons who wish to make a program to be technicians. Second, it is an economical medium, costing far less than either more professional television gear with its accompanying specialist technicians, or even less than Super 8mm film, with sound. In

and their sense of mission in planning local church-sponsored programs.

A final, class or workshop outline will assist the reader in understanding what is proposed for the local church should it acquire a porta-pak in its mission's budget.

THE PORTA-PAK AND THE COMMUNITY

- I. Introduction to the Porta-Pak
 - A. Hands-on experience
 - B. A sample of porta-pak produced programs
- II. How to Introduce the Porta-Pak to the Community
 - A. Existing community programs--eg. clubs, etc.
 - B. Via cable program--advertising
 - C. Local school cooperation--youth take-home equipment
 - D. Demonstrations via cable or meeting
 1. videotapes of neighborhood problem-identification via cable/porta-pak
 2. recording and sharing community events and festivals
 - E. The local church
- III. Church Facilities--Space and Location
 - A. Check-out and training on equipment--volunteers
 - B. Playback of tapes--editing
 - C. A meeting place for viewing tapes
 - D. A library of videotapes--resources and new ideas
 - E. A meeting place for taping
 1. studio (classroom)
 2. mid-point between inner-community and outside visitors
- IV. The Local Congregation
 - A. A regular viewing audience for tapes
 - B. Enlisting their skills and experience
 - C. "Finding out about what's happening in God's world."
 - D. Action and assistance beyond/as a result of tapes
 1. responding to God's world--social action
 2. finding out more about people and problems

addition to being cheaper than film, it is much more immediate. Film requires time for processing to reveal the image and then display on another machine. Video images are immediate, require no external processing, and may be viewed on the same machines which "photographed" the original event. Third, the porta-pak is portable, making it possible to take, or bring, television to places and persons heretofore beyond much of television experience. Moreover, the people living and working in places which the tv tube has never "seen" can have control over the equipment which records, documents, and interprets their lives and circumstances. It may correctly be said, that the "porta-pak" is a people's medium, giving the people their own means of recording and defining their own lives and meaning on a public medium.

In a specific context, churchmen working at Claremont or a similar kind of cable study program, could be asked to view local programming possibilities as if the church owned a porta-pak which it made available to the community. The actual costs are within the range of most local congregations--far less than they would spend for maintenance of church property and buildings (and they could do such maintenance themselves as a form of community building and common life activity). But the ability of churchmen to visualize specific uses of the porta-pak in their communities would greatly increase their imagination

- V. The Wider Audience
 - A. Sharing tapes through denomination and ecumenical channels
 - B.. Organizing ecumenical action and assistance in the community
 - C. Gaining a wider audience--broadcast television
 - D. Expanding the picture--additional equipment/
additional groups
- VI. How Does the New Source of Information Change Local Church Mission?
 - A. Receptivity to video input
 - B. Response to people and problems portrayed

CONSULTATION AS A CHURCH MISSION

Among the several major problems described in the earlier section on cable television was the present situation in most communities regarding cable franchising. Most local officials and community leaders experience confusion and frustration by at once the scarcity and yet the diversity of information and forecasts regarding cable television. Many of the agencies established to provide information on cable systems and franchises are supported by industries and agencies who have significant investments in the cable picture, either financially or technologically. What is therefore needed are sources of information, advice, and counsel regarding cable development in local cities. Currently, the League of American Cities, consumer councils and a couple of university-related information projects are operating--mostly to warn cities about potential hazards in finances, operating costs, and franchises as they relate to the law. Few, if

any, sources exist to creatively explore the programming content of cable tv.

Of the few agencies concerned with programming content, the New York-based Stoney School of the Communicative Arts is perhaps the best known and most effective. They provide, in both video and printed formats, examples of what could be done with a carefully constructed and creatively run local cable system. They have provided practical illustrations of cable's potential to deal with social problems, educational tasks, and the arts. Most importantly, the School has asked questions about values and goals concerning cable's effects on a local neighborhood and in relating that neighborhood to the surrounding neighborhoods and towns and cities.

But, as has been mentioned earlier, cable is a locally-based communications system that is most effective when specifically designed and programmed with a particular community in mind. Therefore, a national pilot or experimental program has only limited usefulness in setting standards and promoting creative ideas in any local community. It is necessary that planners and participants in a proposed cable system be the key agent in shaping that system and determining guidelines for locating, making, and distributing programming. Therefore, the best balance is obtained when local community residents and planners contribute and learn directly from the experimenters,

visionaries, and practical realists working with cable's present and future.

Because of its national and international institutional base, however disjointed, the Church could serve as a medium for the exchange of information and ideas regarding the human aspect of developing cable systems. At the School of Theology at Claremont, this function could be filled by the availability of personnel who could work as local and area consultants for communities planning a cable system. The critical distinction to be made here is that the School-based consultant is not an expert in cable system design, in legal and FCC regulations regarding franchising, or in programming requirements and program format. The consultant is a person who can draw on experts when they are needed and can, from his own knowledge, determine what kinds of specialists and best answer specific needs and questions in any particular community. He is a kind of general practitioner of the cable communications art.

However, the School consultant should recognize that he or she comes from a special kind of tradition. Several of that tradition's characteristics and guidelines were spelled out in a previous chapter dealing with christologies. To fulfill not only a need for organizational and informational assistance, but also to meet a variety of human needs which the cable could serve, the consultant

will have to keep a clear set of personal values in mind and encourage local community planners to reflect upon their own goals and sets of values. It is this act of reflection and a commitment to meet human priorities and needs that will distinguish a School-sponsored cable consultant from consultants in industry, finance, and private development. The distinction is a key one, not only for cable systems, but for the communities whose lives and development will be radically changed by the impact of cable communications in the 1970's and 80's.

A Cable Study Center could have several consultants on its staff either in residence or on short-term assignments to local communities to assist their development of cable. Local churches could recommend and help sponsor such a consultant, and help the community make the financial and time commitment that would make the best possible use of the consultant's services and input. In particular, the consultant will be able to leave an on-going base of reflection and assistance in local churches, especially an ecumenical organization where one exists.

Among the many questions which a consultant with particularly human need-oriented values should ask are the following ones:

1. Will the proposed franchise include specific dates and schedules for wiring the whole community, not just the part of the community that can pay?

2. What financial considerations can be made for low-income neighborhoods or for senior citizens who have the greatest needs for information and communication?

3. Will high installation fees prevent isolated, poverty areas from joining?

4. Are there cable head-end studios available in poverty/minority communities?

5. What portable television equipment will the franchise require the owner and operator to make available? At what fee schedule?

6. What channels, how many, and for what hours will public access programs be available for use by the community?

7. What teaching/training opportunities will there be for community orientation?

8. Will all educational facilities in the community be wired into the system?

9. What income will be assigned to new programming, profits, community revenues?

These and many more questions generated by a local community's participation will help determine whether or not a cable system will be useful in self-help programs and development of neighborhoods and people.

CONFERENCES

No discussion of church-related programs would be complete without a proposal to organize a conference! And in all seriousness, conferences have traditionally been one of the key means by which various denominations have enriched and supported individual clergy and laity. Likewise, conferences have been opportunities for renewal and for doing the organizational work of the church, and for planning and deciding new means of organizing for the future. In the technological fields, conferences are no less important as means for sharing current operating procedures, new equipment, and new theoretical information related to the particular field. It is much the same with the two kinds of conferences proposed for a Cable Study Center's program.

For Clergy and Laypersons

In strong Methodist fashion, the need for renewal is recognized as one vital function of coming together. For local congregations, the reaching-out to other churches and congregational leaders is an affirmation of common bond and hope. For those who participate in such conferences, there is the opportunity for new directions and new resources to support new and old programs.

If cable television is to gain conscientious and sensitive support for its human-oriented services, local communities will need the benefit of trained and sensitive persons. It has already been proposed that the Church has traditions of unique value to the development of cable systems. What we are now concerned with is the means by which that tradition is shared and taught to local communities by the seminary and cable study center.

A conference inviting clergy and laity from communities in a regional area could do a theological task along the lines of value and tradition which have been delineated above. Whatever form the presentations actually take, the general subject area should include Church history as a base for understanding the changing mission of the Churches and how the Church reacted to cultural and social change in earlier periods. Of specific interest would be the period of the postwar Church in Europe as the Churches there worked to re-build both physical communities and confidence in the future and eternal presence of the Spirit. Some of the publications of the German Industrial Missions and of the London Industrial Missions would be useful examples.

Theology is also a critical input to these conferences, posing questions and alternatives for the Church in response to contemporary problems and future ones. The Christian vision as it might be interpreted by Chardin,

or Soleri--in non-christian symbols, would be prime subjects for participants to study and discuss. The particular servant traditions of the Church should also be examined quite closely, perhaps with emphasis on the Christological images generated by Brunner, Gustafson, and Soelle.

Application of theological tradition to present local church circumstances should command a priority in time and input at such a conference. Participants may be asked to perform specific survey tasks in their communities before coming to the conference in order to have available hard documentation and experience with which to do theology in a local setting. Model-building becomes a useful kind of experience for participants if the relationship between theological images and local community needs can be successfully interfaced by theologians and laypersons representing the community.

It could be the intent of such conferences to help clergy and laypersons understand that the tradition is a valuable resource for the present and future. It may also continue to help the seminary understand the need and condition of the local church and respond with training for students and in-service clergy.

For Public and Municipal Leadership

I am aware of a popular derogatory opinion that states "All we need is another conference for our city officials to attend". Nonetheless, conferences may be based on genuine need and interest and, as has been indicated earlier, need does exist for information, consultation, and other assistance to local communities working with cable television. The genuine need that the School of Theology and a Cable Study Center could fill is for a statement and restatement of vision concerning the future of cable communications and human communities.

In recent years, the Churches have provided public forums for such visionaries as Buckminster Fuller, Palo Soleri (in the area of city planning), Garrett Hardin, Kenneth Boulding (in the area of economics), and Benjamin Zablocki in the field of present and future life styles. Through such forums, genuine alternatives for the future of cities, neighborhoods, and individual persons emerge and are shared with individuals and those responsible for leadership positions in their communities.

The seminary and the Cable Study Center could choose to sponsor a conference for city planners and elected officials which would focus on the kinds of communication and organization, or reorganization, possible with emerging cable technology. The benefits to which cable

systems could be designed and used should be the subject of full conference presentations and a wide variety of individual models could be presented in smaller, discussion-oriented groups.

The study center could bring together in such a conference, engineers, cable franchise experts, financial planners, and city visionaries, as well as the individual citizen who will be most affected by cable communications. Careful preparation will assure a wide range of subjects and questions are covered and careful monitoring will help all points-of-view get a hearing. In particular, the conference planners and staff of the Study Center will want to make sure that the human questions and alternatives are fully explored by all participants. It is the responsibility of churchpersons to witness to their own beliefs and tradition by seeing to it that the questions which are asked and the answers that are given at such conferences reflect the genuine human condition, and not simply limited stereotypes of the ideal American community.

Should the results of such conferences be of value to communities, the study center should make whatever arrangements are necessary to provide conference addressed, panels, reports, etc. in a variety of formats at the lowest possible price. Attention should also be given to making use of videotape for reports or distribution of information whenever possible. Not only does this encourage use and

exposure to the subject medium, but it may well be the most ecological distribution means available, allowing local cable systems, neighborhoods, or information users to erase and re-use the original report tape, perhaps as a means of reporting back to the Study Center what is happening in their local system.

CHURCH AND SEMINARY PRODUCTION

This subject has purposely been reserved for the final pages of this paper. It is the intent of this author to encourage the local church to encourage others in the creative use and development of cable television. My own personal experience in many local churches suggests that many new programs are often designed with the needs of the local church in mind first, and then the needs of the local community. By placing a brief section on church program production at the final section of this paper, I hope to emphasize the point about serving other needs first.

Nonetheless, there are a number of exciting uses to which the Church could make use of cable television to strengthen and expand its own programs, goals, and priorities. These uses will be briefly listed and described, recognizing that they are in themselves proper subjects for another examination and cannot be adequately dealt with in these pages.

Education for Churchpersons

As noted in the very first chapter, fundamentally conservative groups have been using cable for years as a means of evangelizing and of "gathering" together a television congregation and audience. The programming available from these sources remains fairly simple and straightforward--a static experience of salvation and the Gospel. "Static" in program content seems a contradiction for the experience of conversion and the coming of the Good News!

But mainline Protestant denominations with years of experience in curriculum development and continuing educational resource production can undoubtedly find use for cable television as a training/resource for church members. Surely, the film and tape versions of the Bauman New Testament classes taught us something about the use of media for congregational education. On a designated channel, or specified time slot, local churches, or preferably, local ecumenical organizations could cablecast Bible study, Church history, contemporary Christian ethics, and perhaps less specifically Christian-oriented subject matter such as new life styles, alternative energy sources, and discussions of the future.

Alternatives to the Present and Past

The key to one area of successful program development may be in the seminary's growing concern with alternatives in the fields of energy, life style, housing and cities, social service and mission, and personnel and individual growth. The designated cable channel offers the perfect medium in which to establish an information source, data bank, and a medium of exchange of ideas about the future. Seminary video production facilities, similar to the new one at Claremont could produce series of programs exploring alternatives in society and featuring critical evaluation and response by seminary faculty who are concerned with the future.

A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A

KEN DOWNES / ASSOCIATES

OUTLINE OF PROVISIONS FOR A

BASIC MUNICIPAL CABLE TELEVISION ORDINANCE + AWARD ORDINANCE

A basic ordinance is intended to set forth essential standard and special provisions which should apply generally to any cable TV franchise granted. It sets up a requirement for various performance criteria and dates, and also provides for the use of specific performance specifications. It is designed to be followed by a second, brief ordinance which supplies all of the specific information relating to the cable company which finally receives the franchise award. The second ordinance makes the actual award.

An outline of the suggested form of the basic ordinance is as follows:

Title: Form as used in other City ordinances.

Declaration: Normal type of statement made by the City Council to establish a new section in the City Code.

Section 1: Definitions - Such terms as "City", "Franchise", "Grantee", "Street", "Property of Grantee", "Subscriber", "Cable Television System", and "Gross Annual Basic Subscriber Receipts" should be given exact meanings.

Section 2: Statement of Council's right to grant a franchise for all or part of the city's area. Cable franchise subject only to this ordinance. No compulsion to grant a franchise. Same rules for cable system whether using own facilities or those of telephone company.

Section 3: Uses Permitted Grantee - To build and operate a cable TV system; to charge a fee for service.

Section 4: General Franchise Provisions - Grantee shall comply with all zoning, construction and other requirements. Grantee shall obtain all needed licenses and certificates, and adhere to all

laws and regulations. Grantee also to maintain adequate TV shielding in system.

Section 5: Cable Television Service - Basic service to include broadcast relay, two-way potential, handle color TV, provide free channel to the city and the schools. Other services include local programming and right to carry all other types of electronic signals.

Performance includes: Limit and quickly repair outages; handle subscriber complaints promptly; render efficient service; maintain an office in the city; provide use of the studio to the City at cost; free connections to school and municipal public buildings. System to be compatible with neighboring cables and connected where possible.

Section 6: Duration of License - Set maximum term for any franchise. Provide public hearing prior to termination. Require grantee to comply with all ordinance provisions, unless not in his power to do so.

Section 7: Franchise Payments - Specify franchise fee as percent of gross revenues. Establish timing of financial reports and payments. City has right to examine grantees books. Provide penalty for operation after franchise termination.

Section 8: Limitations of Franchise - Define degree of franchise exclusivity. Withhold all privileges not specifically granted by ordinance. Place privileges subordinate to existing ones. Establish conditions of sale or transfer of franchise. Establish time as a critical factor. Limit grantees recourse against City. Require grantee to deal with other utility companies as needed. Place rights and responsibilities for administration, construction, and property rights entirely this ordinance and no others.

Section 9: Right Reserved to the City - State nothing herein modifies city's right of eminent domain. Grantee, by acceptance of franchise, agrees that City retains all rights and privileges previously held and may take any action needed to enforce franchise. City manager, if mutually acceptable to parties, may settle disputes.

- Section 10: Permits and Construction - Set time limits for securing permits and taking other actions required to permit start of work. Set period thereafter by which work will begin, and for start of service to subscribers. Define results of failures to take needed actions, and conditions under which deadlines will be extended. Require to use existing utility works where possible and give City right to use same works as needed. Require that continuity of other utilities be maintained and that grantee repair any damage. Set penalties for failure by grantee to make repairs.
- Section 11: Removal and Abandonment of Property of Grantee - Provide that if grantee discontinues use of cable equipment he will remove it and, if not removed, it shall become property of the City.
- Section 12: Provide for necessary performance bonds in relation to time of various performances and intents of grantee. Provide bond to cover damages suffered by subscribers through actions of grantee. Indemnify the City for actions of grantee. Require grantee to defend himself and/or participate with the City in litigation against third parties. Establish various insurance coverages by grantee which also cover the City.
- Section 13: Inspection of Property and Technical Records - Provide that City may inspect grantees property and records. Grantee shall provide City with needed reports as listed. Grantee shall provide a set of plans for cable system and copies of required permits for changes.
- Section 14: Operational Standards - List various Federal Communications Commission standards for cable systems and require that the system meet them. (These are basic standards for the passage of signals. The specifications for performance of studio equipment and the other equipment involved in special services is contained in the separate performance specifications.)
- Section 15: Application for Franchise - Set forth manner of franchise application and general content: Grantees name and address; description of system and proposed method of operation; description of facilities to be installed; map show-

ing the service area; schedule of rates and charges; copies of all contracts and agreements by grantee with others relating to the system; statement of grantees financial capability; disclosure of any criminal proceedings, litigation, or government restricting actions grantee has been subject to; and related information needed by City for decision.

Section 16: Granting or Denial of Franchise - Set forth procedure and steps for consideration of franchise applications. Limit franchise by included statement to only those purposes for which granted.

Section 17: Franchise Renewal - Provide for first refusal by Grantee for second franchise period if grantee not then in default in any area.

Section 18: Acceptance and Effective Date of Franchise - Provide no franchise is effective without separate Council action. Set period for acceptance by grantee after date of award action.

Section 19: Miscellaneous Provisions - All documents shall be filed with the City Clerk. Grantee shall reimburse the City for expense of publication of the award ordinance. No person in the grantee's service area shall be arbitrarily refused service. Grantee shall be subject to all other City ordinances and regulations. Rights of way granted by this ordinance are subject to prior rights of way. This ordinance is subordinate to any State or Federal assumptions of jurisdiction. Exercise of the City's police power shall not affect this ordinance. All aspects of the award ordinance are declared contractual in nature and for the benefit of the City. Grantee shall notify subscribers that City is not liable for failures of cable service.

Section 20: Equal Opportunity Employment and Affirmative Action Plan - Grantee will not discriminate in hiring for construction or operations. Equal opportunities will be granted in hiring, promotion, and training all of grantees employees. Grantee will post notices containing non-discrimination clauses of this ordinance. Equal opportunity phrasing will be included in all

advertising for employees. Grantee will require all subcontractors to abide by the same non-discrimination rules.

Section 21: Violations - Provide that various behaviors are unlawful to provide basis for enforcement of ordinance: Franchise required for operation of cable TV in the City; No use of public rights of way for CATV without a franchise; No connections permitted to cable systems without payment of owner's fees; No tampering with CATV equipment permitted without authorization.

Section 22: Any sections of this ordinance held invalid shall not affect the force of all other sections.

Section 23: Normal statement of date of force of ordinance and record of passage and affirmation or certification of Council favorable vote, plus the usually required signatures according to City procedure.

KEN DOWNES / ASSOCIATES

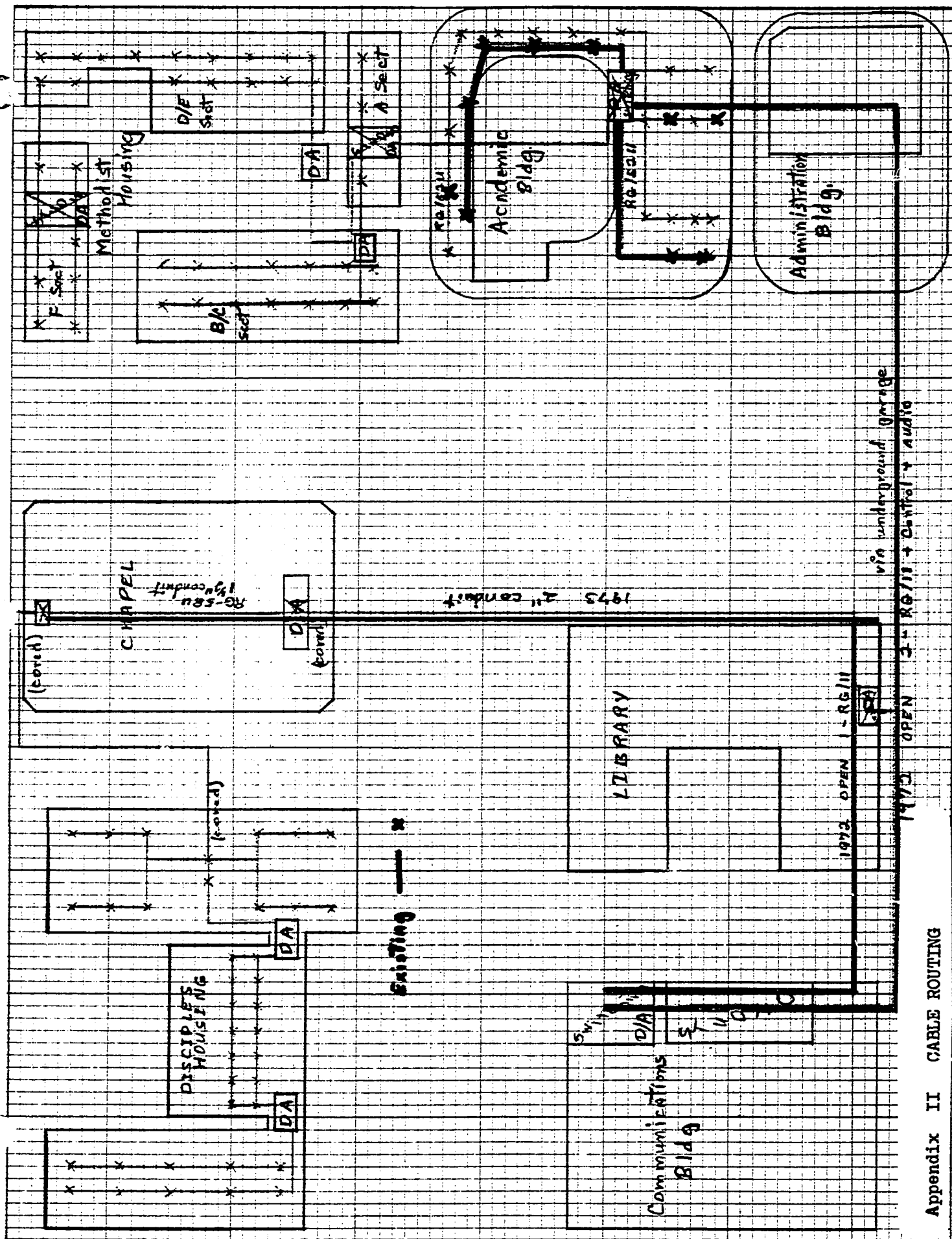
OUTLINE OF CABLE TELEVISION AWARD ORDINANCE

The actual award ordinance is a brief one which simply fills in the information called for in the basic or "master" ordinance. Provisions, which fit the master ordinance, are as follows:

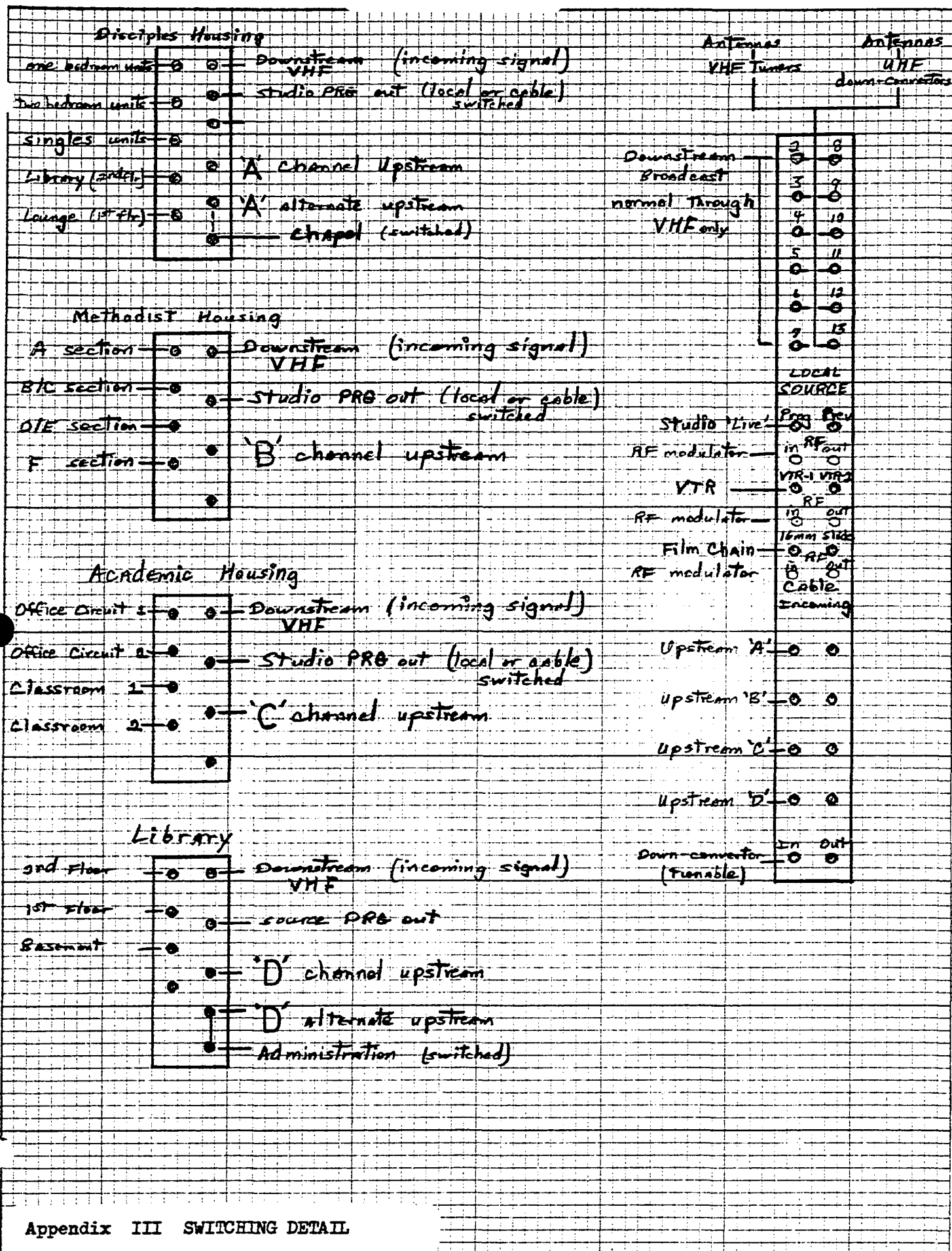
- Title: Form as used in other City ordinances.
- Section 1: Citation of passage of this ordinance in accord with master ordinance.
- Section 2: Statement of award of franchise to named company for a period of years, subject to all provisions of master ordinance.
- Section 3: Stipulates that the original ordinance is the "master ordinance".
- Section 4: Restricts the cable system to the purposes authorized only.
- Section 5: Incorporates the grantees proposal as a part of the franchise and states that provisions of the ordinances prevail over the proposal.
- Section 6: Approves the schedule of rates and charges in the proposal.
- Section 7: Specifies the amounts and schedules of performance bonds, if any.
- Section 8: States the total amount of any subscriber bond required.
- Section 9: Sets up schedule for payment of franchise fees, including minimums.
- Section 10: Specifies time for start of construction work.
- Section 11: Specifies date for first availability of subscriber service.
- Section 12: Formally incorporates the "performance requirements" in the ordinance.

Section 13: Sets forth date of effectiveness of the
award and its ordinance.

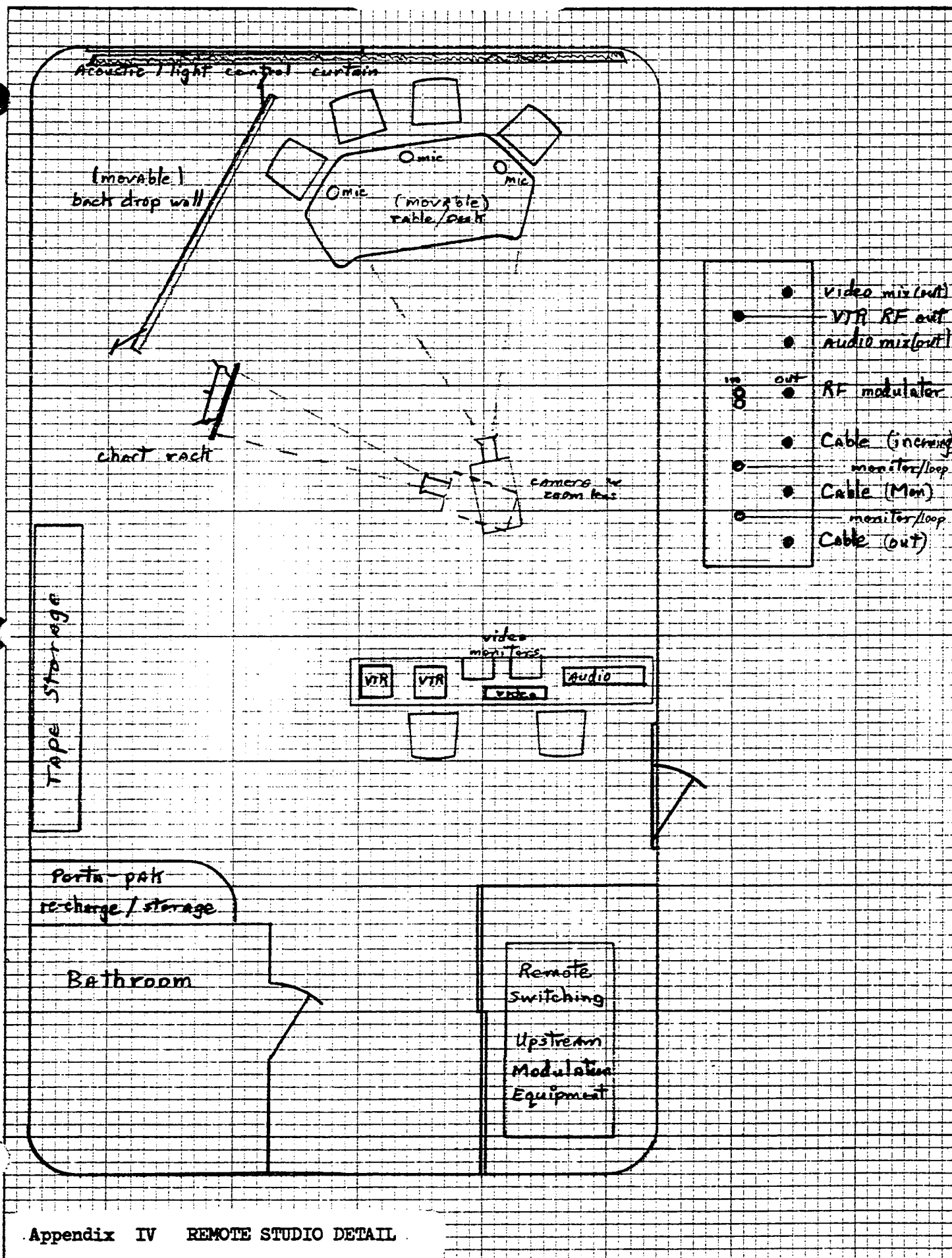
Normal ending: Record of passage and affirmation of
Council votes.



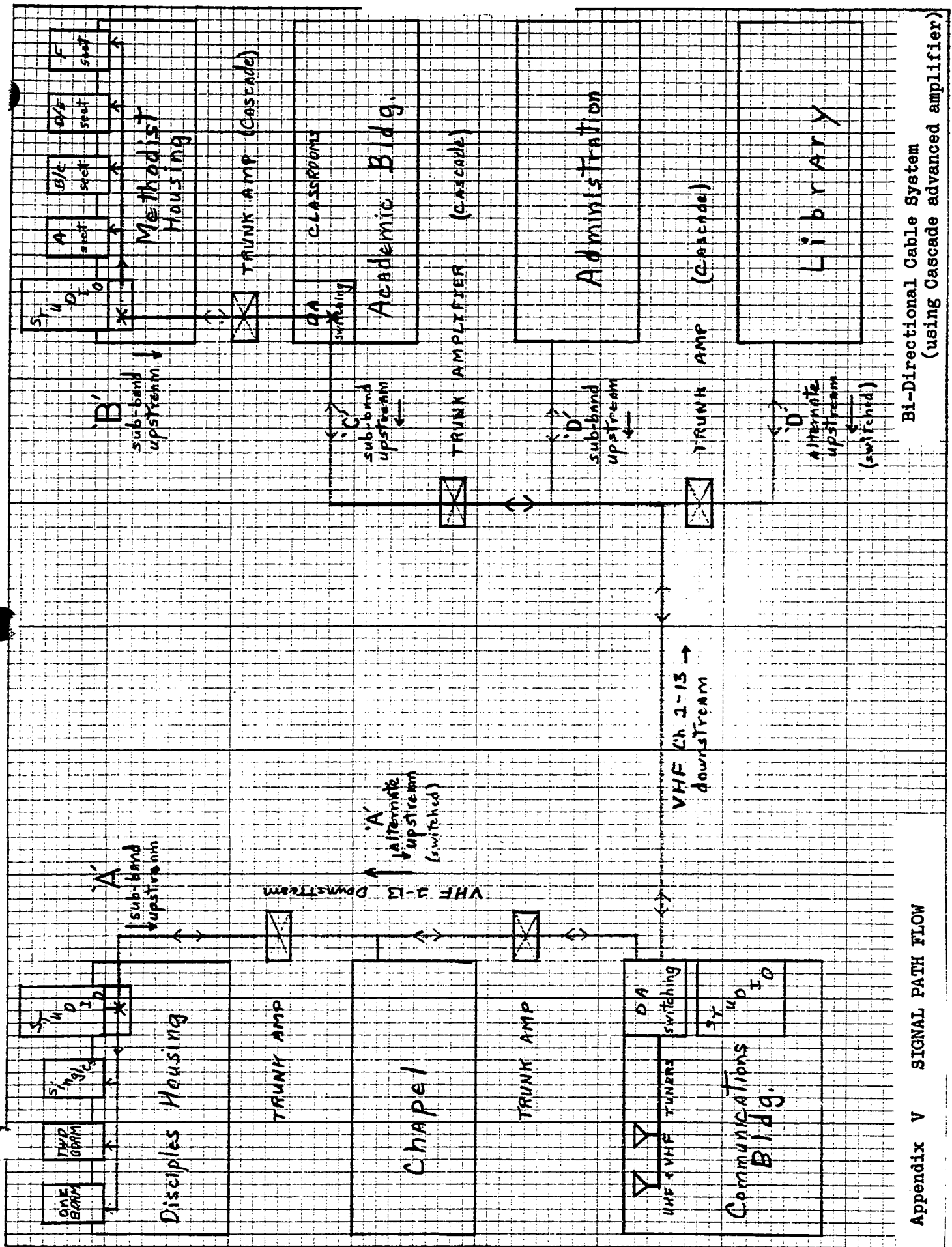
Appendix II CABLE ROUTING



Appendix III SWITCHING DETAIL



Appendix IV REMOTE STUDIO DETAIL



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